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Are the Allies Shadow-Boxing?

From the beginning of the war it has been said that as soon as Poland was crushed, Hitler would offer peace to England and France, based upon his keeping a large part of the territory that is in his hands. When it was announced that he would speak in Danzig on September 19, it was widely supposed that his speech might be of this character, but the prophets were wrong. It was on the whole a fighting speech, seeking to justify the attack on Poland, promising that Germany can withstand a long war and emphasizing that Russia invaded Poland with Germany's advance knowledge and consent. The point is, of course, that the British had destroyed the usefulness of a peace offer in advance, by saying they would fight on until "Hitlerism" is destroyed. No one knows just what they mean by this, or what kind of peace would be made under this condition. Obviously, terms might be set with Hitler out of the way that would be nearly as bad as those set with Hitler in power. It is reported that since the war began, the British have made secret contacts with German army officers as to possible terms with Hitler gone. Now, of course, Soviet Russia must be reckoned with as well, since Poland can no longer be reconstituted without her consent—a highly improbable consent so far as concerns the territory Russia now holds.

Reports of impending peace offers were coupled in the minds of many persons with a puzzled feeling that England and France have not begun fighting as wholeheartedly as they could; that they seem to be pulling their punches in the expectation that something will turn up. As we point out elsewhere in this issue, this feeling results partly from a misunderstanding. It takes longer to get soldiers into the front lines than laymen suppose; such fortifications as the Maginot and Siegfried Lines are nearly impregnable; the censorship has, perhaps unwisely, concealed from the public much of the comparatively limited activity that has already taken place. The fact that they are slow in starting does not necessarily mean that Britain and France are not prepared to go on to the end.

What Stalin Has Lost

Realists in international politics are inclined to scoff at moral issues, but these intangibles nevertheless weigh heavily in the long run. The strength of the Soviet Union throughout the world has hitherto rested not so much on her great army, her large population and her vast territory and resources, as on a widespread faith among humble folk—and some not so humble—that she constituted a bulwark of honesty and humanity in a treacherous world. Her proudest boast was the clear and simple line of her foreign policy. The more the Soviet Union was attacked by her natural enemies, the stronger this faith grew. But, except among devout Communists, it has now been lost; henceforth the power of the Russian state abroad must rest on fear rather than trust.

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It is true, of course, that Poland's government was reactionary. Nevertheless the Soviet Union had made a non-aggression pact with it, expiring in 1945. And she broke her word when it was to her advantage, just as cynically as any other world power. Many facts about Stalin's regime have hitherto been veiled by the privacies of internal politics. Now that he has played his part on a world stage where everybody could see, there are loud boos from the gallery. The more cynical pit and boxes are confirmed.

Democracy Means Something

People must have something in which to repose hope and confidence; it is likely that with the eclipse of Russia's moral prestige they will turn more and more to this country—the last great nation to remain at peace under democratic institutions. Shall we act in such a way as to deserve and foster it? It is a heavy responsibility. In spite of our many failings, our great strength is that here at least people have a chance to speak, to vote, to affect the actions of their rulers. We are not docile followers of an exalted "leader" who in fact is a dictator and can surprise us unpleasantly with unexpected and world-shaking decisions. If we can manage to retain the belief of those both at home and abroad that here at least simple human values count, however clumsily they may be effectuated, we shall have done something to save the faith that the world needs, in one of its darkest hours.

Misguided Senators

If we understand Senators Borah, Nye, Vandenberg and other leaders of the isolationist Senators correctly, they are either ignorant of their chosen subject or are playing the worst kind of politics. They want to keep the United States out of war; so does The New Republic. They support neutrality legislation for that purpose; The New Republic was a pioneer in the study and advocacy of such legislation. Why then are they not making the country resound with pleas for the strengthening of that legislation by the restoration of the cash-and-carry plan? Do they not know that American ships are at this very moment carrying contraband other than munitions to belligerents through seas infested by German submarines and British destroyers? Do they not see that the greatest possible protection of our peace is the ending of this practice? Besides this necessity, the arms embargo, upon which they concentrate their support, is unimportant. They are privileged to believe that it will help keep the country out of war, but if they sacrifice the cash-and-carry principle on all other war goods in order to win their fight for the embargo on munitions, they will have done as much as anybody could to get us in.

Our own army and navy are keeping our arms plants more than busy; the Allies cannot import many munitions from us in any case. Much more important to them are the materials not embargoed—materials which Germany has declared contraband. It is reckless to misuse the great national will toward peace by directing it toward a minor issue.

Submarines Are Dangerous

The British have suffered a serious blow in the loss of the aircraft carrier "Courageous"; first reports indicate that the number of dead may be nearly 600. The torpedoing of this vessel does not necessarily reflect on the British Admiralty's plans; it is always possible that a single submarine may make one lucky hit. Far more serious is the steady loss of British merchant vessels, amounting to about twenty in the first two weeks of the war. This is not quite so bad as the record of the first two weeks of unrestricted submarine warfare early in 1917, but it is unexpectedly high. The British cannot afford to lose ships at the rate of one and a half a day for very many months.

Before the war started there were confident predictions that the menace of the submarine had been solved; but there is no evidence as yet that this is true. The British government reports that "a number" of submarines have been sunk; but we do not know how many, nor the total number in the German undersea fleet. In the last war, the convoy system was an almost complete success. To organize such a system of course takes time, and this may account for the fact that many of the ships sunk up to now were unguarded. (In most cases the commanders of the German subs acted in marked contrast to the man who sank the "Athenia," and gave the crews of torpedoed vessels every assistance.) But even allowing for the difficulty of getting convoys under way, it is hard to understand the announcement, ten days after the war had started, that the British Admiralty had just decided that the convoy system had better be instituted.

Why Sailors Won't Leave Home

The rapid and widespread development of submarine warfare in the North Atlantic is the only argument American sailors need offer to back up their request for heavy life insurance and extra pay for traveling in war zones. The ship-owners themselves are asking higher rates for greater property risks, and it is hard to see how they can justly refuse the same demand from the seamen who risk their lives. But they have done so, in effect at least, by stalling negotiations and attempting to get the ships out to sea, where any action on the part of the crew can be called mutiny. They have preferred criminal charges against the crew of one vessel, for refusing to sail after signing on. The men reply that they believe the ship to be carrying munitions.

Two issues are at stake in the strike, one of immediate and the other of future importance. Americans attempting to get home from Europe need transporta-

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tion, and both sides should be urged to settle their differences speedily on that account. So far, the union has made concessions and offers to solve this problem; the ship-owners have stalled. The other ultimately more important matter is that sailors shall not be forced to abandon their right of collective bargaining because of war hysteria. This is a case where saving democracy begins at home.

Flying Dutchman

The "Bremen," flagship of the German merchant fleet, has been in more assorted ends of the world at the same time, these past weeks, than anything since Cervera's dreaded and leaky warships. It is cruising, it is safe; it's down, it's up; Mexico, Iceland, Italy, Murmansk—and now, according to a rather cross statement by the German Ambassador to Russia, somewhere in the vicinity of Mr. Winston Churchill. It is already as good a legend as The Flying Dutchman. The only trouble is that anybody with half enough wit to write an opera out of anything has been chased out of its native Germany long since. And the best we can do, as strict neutrals, is a brief toast to this pride of the Swastika afloat: BOTTOMS UP.

The Censors Bungle

That censorships are stupidly operated has become a tradition; but this is not much excuse for the British, who have started off with an unparalleled display of bungling. Conflicting stories have been sent out simultaneously, efforts have been made to preserve secrecy on things that were bound to leak out and, worst of all, such an attempt was made to suppress war news that the neutral world got the impression that England wasn't even trying. One order actually forbade all export of pictures from the British Isles—a move so ridiculous that even the censor soon saw the light and modified the rule. What the censor seemed to forget was that the situation today is entirely different from that of 1914. All countries are now linked by radio, which the British are unable to control. When they stopped the movement of pictures, Berlin went merrily on transmitting them by wireless, with the result that for the better part of the week American newspapers published nothing but German propaganda photographs. Even the British newspapers, which are usually loyal allies of the government in printing or suppressing what is desired, found the censorship more than they could stomach. For this and other reasons, the situation is improving.

We Have Our Censors Too

Several months ago the New York State Board of Motion Picture Censors forbade the public showing of a French film, "Harvest." Presumably they did so because the two chief characters were married only under the common law. Critics who saw the film were unanimous in saying that there was nothing in it to upset anyone's morals and that the Board of Censors, whose public career is practically an unbroken record of stupidity, had outdone themselves. The New York State Board of Regents, which is superior to the Censorship Board in authority, evidently agreed. It has overruled the Board (as The New Republic predicted it would) and released this poignant little story of French peasant life, without deleting a foot.

Back to Handicraft

The Farm Security Administration has an interesting policy which it proposes to apply to 18,000 poor farmers in the northeastern section of the country. According to Philip Henderson, regional director of the FSA, these farmers will be taught to churn their own butter, grind their own flour and weave their own cloth. He believes that substantial savings can be made in the governmental assistance going to these farmers, who now sell their products for what they can get and buy their necessities in the open market.

The Twentieth Century Fund revealed the other day that, on the average, the producer gets only 40 percent of the consumer's dollar; the other 60 percent goes to middlemen. Mr. Henderson's 18,000 farmers are paying prices based partly on too many small retail stores, on charge accounts, delivery service, elaborate packaging of staple products, competitive advertising that is sometimes wasteful. He is very likely right in saying that they will be better off financially to churn their own butter and grind their own flour. But what a commentary on our civilization! When the machine-powered creamery was invented, when flour and textile mills grew to gigantic proportions, they were hailed as tremendous forward strides for humanity, doing away with vast quantities of isolated, individual toil and substituting that of a few men and many machines. Here we see the trend toward technological efficiency reversed because we haven't enough collective intelligence to use our machines to set us free.

A Bill for Industrial Expansion

Those who read the proposal by Mr. W. Jett Lauck in the recent series, "After the New Deal," may be interested to know that in the closing days of the recent session, Senator Keller of Illinois introduced a long and detailed bill embodying the program of Mr. Lauck and the Association for Economic Freedom, which he represents. The bill seeks to mobilize the entire industrial system for expanded production, full employment, lower prices and an increased standard of living. Charged with the administrative responsibility would be an expert Industrial Reconstruction Commission. Under it would be a Planning Board to draw up a production program. The several industries, organized by Councils, each containing representatives of management, labor, the Planning Board and the public,

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would draw up their own schedules for expanded operation, subject to the approval of the Commission and the Board. The bill creates a Marketing Corporation to assist in the distribution of products and to buy and dispose of any surpluses arising under the expansion program, thus insuring the participants against loss through lack of sales at the prices agreed upon. A Capital Issues Banking System would supply any necessary capital funds. Finally, observance of the scheme would be obtained by a federal licensing system compulsory to all corporations doing an interstate business.

A Prophecy Fulfilled

So many prophecies have gone wrong recently that we should like to record one that has stood up somewhat better (except for its last sentence). Writing in the May issue of Asia, in an article that must have been composed before the middle of March, Anna Louise Strong said:

> Yet there might be conditions under which Soviet-German rapprochement might again happen, as in Rapallo Treaty days. . . . The USSR stands against the whole alliance of world capitalism, which, like the Soviet Union, must act in terms of nations, since these are the organized governmental forms today. As long as Hitler and Mussolini are the willing tools of world reaction, the Soviets will oppose them. If French and British governments become equally "ruled by Fascists," Soviet policy may be used to play one against another. But should Germany or Italy one day, economically cracking, grow restive against the dominance of London City and seek, even in some confused manner, escape from their present position as the vanguard of reactionary world imperialism, then indeed there might be a sudden change in Soviet policy. The Soviets and the London bankers would be the first to sense such inner shifts in Italy or Germany, long before these were permitted to be known in the press of the Western World.
>
> Then one might have indeed the shock of a sudden peace in Europe, more startling than the present war.

Slow Death in China

At first Japan wrecked Chinese lives by bombing raids, shocking the world. Now, the world having become accustomed to bombing, she is wrecking them by the even more sure and terrible means of occupation and exploitation. There is no noise to it, and the world hardly hears of it. But here is part of the story of Nanking, taken from a report—"The Nanking Population"—compiled by Dr. S. M. Bates, an American professor of History at Nanking University, for the Nanking International Relief Committee, 4 Tientsin Road, Nanking, China. Dr. Bates's investigators went from house to house talking to 1,706 families representing 7,161 persons, and they believe their conclusions hold generally for city life in the lower Yangtse basin. They found that men of the "working" ages—15 to 49 years old—now make up 22 percent of the population. Formerly they were 30 percent, but "violent death, compulsion or fear of compulsion" have removed one-fourth. About 27 percent of the population is employed; "normal" would be half that many more. An average employed person makes about 8 cents a day—40 percent of the previous standard—and almost half the employed make less than $1.65 monthly, whereas just one-eighth were formerly in that group. Ten percent make $3.35 to $5, as against 30 percent formerly. Three percent make $5 to $10, as against 12 percent formerly; one percent more than $10, as against 8 percent formerly.

Sidelight

During the first week of war, contributions to The New Republic's department, The Bandwagon, fell off by about 90 percent. Either our readers were too excited to tear things out, or else they felt that everything in the world was one vast Bandwagon item.

Russia Shakes the World

Two actions of Soviet Russia within a week have plunged the world into desperate confusion and uncertainty. The first was the armistice with Japan and the second the invasion of Poland.

No one can be sure exactly what the Russian government intends to do. Her official pronouncements are now subject to the same degree of discount as those of other governments. It looks very much, however, as though the understanding with Germany is intended to be permanent, and as though Soviet Russia is now to have control of a large amount of territory outside her own borders. A fortnight ago there were reports in London about an agreement between Russia and Germany under which the former would get the Baltic states, eastern Poland and Bessarabia from Rumania. Russia's action in Poland strengthens these surmises.

It is quite true that there are millions of Ukrainians and former inhabitants of White Russia in Poland—the estimates range from a Polish figure of 6,000,000 to a Russian figure of 11,000,000. It is true that these minorities have been abominably misgoverned by the Poles, whereas under the Russians they will at least have their own schools. It is also true that a large part of eastern Poland was seized from Russia in the war of 1920. Bessarabia was forcibly annexed by Rumania from Russia, which has never legally consented to the action. One can admit all this and still note that a vein of insincerity runs through the Russian announcements regarding the reasons for invading Polish soil.

When Russia starts talking about an attack by Polish military airplanes, begins calling the Poles bad names, announces that she must "liberate" the White Russians and Ukrainians in Poland, asserts, at a time when it was not true, that the Polish government had

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fled to another country—there is an ominous echo of Hitler's tactics in the Sudetenland and before he moved to seize Danzig. There is no available evidence that the White Russians and Polish Ukrainians want to be under Russian protection; there was a Ukrainian independence movement but it was subsidized from Berlin, as the Rhineland separatist movement was once subsidized from Paris. Stalin's invasion of Poland from the east has too much in common with Hitler's invasion from the west for any defender of Soviet morals to feel comfortable about it.

The action of Turkey shows which way the wind is blowing. On the whole, Turkey has heretofore been on the British side. As Poland crumbled and the Red Army struck, she hastily sent her Foreign Minister to Moscow to make new terms with Russia and, it was reported, with Germany as well. These terms will consist of another of those "non-aggression" treaties which the world has recently come to fear.

Of equal importance with the invasion of Poland is Russia's action in the Far East. There she has arranged an armistice with Japan and the fighting in Outer Mongolia has stopped. From Moscow comes no clear explanation of what has happened, though there are hints that a non-aggression treaty has been or will be signed. In Tokyo such reports are ridiculed; there the armistice is described as a mere stoppage of hostilities on a limited front, which carries no implications for the future. But the Japanese are probably concealing their true motives. Already they are moving the great Kwangtung army from the Siberian border south into China to hurl it against the forces of Chiang Kai-shek. Throughout the war with China, Japan's crack troops remained in the north facing the Soviet boundary. They would not be moved now if Japan were not sure that she is free from attack by the Russians.

It looks very much as though the whole Far Eastern picture had been radically altered in a day. Fear of the Russians has enormously hampered Japan; if that fear is removed, she has a far better chance of crushing Chiang Kai-shek, who is further crippled because his good friends the British, who have been lending him money and sending him supplies, are now busy with a war of their own in Europe. If China is conquered, the European and American powers will have to get out of the Far East in a hurry. Hongkong will be in imminent peril and in the course of time the Philippines will also be threatened. French Indo-China, Siam, the Straits Settlement, the Dutch East Indies—who is to put a limit to the ambitions of a conquering nation that is on the march?

It is no exaggeration to say that by her actions in a single week Russia has shaken the whole world. It may be that her own intentions are pacific; that in the East she wishes only to be free of the Japanese threat and that in the West she is concerned with nothing but restoring Russia's old frontier, and creating a buffer state between herself and Germany. Even if these are her aims, her very passivity now makes her a member of the Fascist bloc. The American Communists who said that the Russo-German non-aggression treaty had broken the Axis, set Japan adrift and weakened the ties with Italy, turn out to have been if not tragically at least fantastically wrong. Already we see a renewed warmth towards Germany on the part of the Italian government (not the people, who hate the Germans in the earthy Italian way). It is now clear, if it was in doubt before, that Italy's neutrality is pro-German.

In Southeastern Europe the effects of Russia's action are decisive. If she wants to take back Bessarabia from Rumania, no one can stop her. If Hungary seeks the restoration of Transylvania, Russia and Germany will look benignly on and England and France will be unable to interpose a veto. The news is as bad as possible for every country that has been either neutral or in favor of the Western Allies, and we shall probably see a rush to get in out of the storm. Whether Russia strikes against Rumania or not, the threat of her action is sufficient to compel the unhappy Rumanians to supply oil and wheat to the Germans, whose strength is thus augmented at one of its weakest points.

When the war is liquidated on the Eastern front, which would seem to be a matter of days, the situation in the West will also change. If England and France do not accept Hitler's new offer of peace—and it is hard to see how they can—we shall probably witness a policy of "frightfulness" against them, a policy thus far held in abeyance in the hope of ending the war with the crushing of Poland. Efforts might be made to bomb London and Paris from the air and, if so, there will probably be retaliation by the Western Allies against the Rhineland cities and Berlin. Despairing of wasting his troops against the Maginot Line, Hitler may violate the neutrality of Switzerland, Belgium and the Netherlands. Or it is possible that the Allies themselves may do so.

Some people are saying that at one stroke Stalin has destroyed the French and British Empires, that these two nations suddenly find themselves fighting, with their backs to the wall, for self-preservation. It is too early for such easy and sweeping generalizations. Germany's internal situation continues to be bad; the British and French staying power is still tremendous; Hitler and Stalin must be uneasy bedfellows who might quarrel over division of the spoils. Yet it is true that when the Red Army marched, the cause of the Western Allies was injured more than it has been by anything since Mr. Chamberlain gave away Czecho-Slovakia. The menace of a totalitarian Europe and Asia is far greater than it was seven days ago. Necessarily new and acute problems are created for the United States both in its relations to Europe and to the Far East.

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Siege or Storm?

IMPATIENCE with the slow development of military operations on the western front is natural. Britain and France were well prepared, and the crisis developed slowly enough so that they could mobilize before the declaration of war. Poland was being overrun by Hitler's *Blitzkrieg*. His strategy was well known to be quickly to conquer the Poles, then turn to the west for peace or war, as the case might be. Allowing him to do so would mean not only establishing German domination of Poland, at least temporarily, but failing to take military advantage of the eastward concentration of his troops and energies. Finally, there was an unreflecting eagerness for aggressive action and excitement, for a crushing blow against the enemy who for so long had been feared and hated. As an American has remarked, "Japan, Germany and Italy fight without declaring war; France and England declare war without fighting."

There is a strategic theory, perhaps entertained by the governments and the general staffs concerned, which would explain this deliberation. It is the theory which regards the war as a long siege rather than as a knock-out blow. Hitler, before the outbreak of war, had raised his fighting power to the limit. He was at the peak of his usable resources of materials and labor, which must decline from now on. The morale of his people is of the kind that regards him as invincible and looks for quick successes, but will disintegrate under the strain of a prolonged conflict without decision. His enemies, on the other hand, while no better prepared to strike immediate crushing blows than he, and perhaps not so well prepared, have much larger unused resources of man power and materials for the long run. They are capable, furthermore, of setting their teeth for a long and weary job. The balance of forces might indicate that the wisest plan is to avoid decisive battles in the early stages, when Hitler's power is highest and theirs is lowest, but to wait while he deteriorates, laying siege to the German fortress rather than storming it at the outset.

The actual situation gives point to such strategy. France is now safe behind the Maginot Line and the neutrality of Belgium and Switzerland. Britain is safe behind her navy. Submarines may sink ships, but not nearly so many as last time, because the defense against them has markedly improved. The air forces of the Allies are at least strong enough to retain superiority on the defensive; as time goes on the capacity to replace losses of men and machines will favor them more and more. Hitler therefore cannot deliver any crushing blows against these allies unless they give him the opportunity by doing something rash. As for Poland, no sufficient direct help could have been brought to her anyway.

The siege can be laid, meanwhile, by the naval blockade, which can prevent Germany from getting any materials through the Atlantic or the Mediterranean, and by the armies and air forces constantly ready to harass and take advantage of any weakness. Germany can obtain wheat, oil and minerals in the east, of course, but can she, with war shortages of labor and war demands on industry, pay for enough to replenish her supplies? It is doubtful.

Contrast this with the risks of taking the offensive. Germany, too, is protected by Belgium and Switzerland and by the Westwall. This line may not be so good as the Maginot, but it is nothing to be assaulted lightly. The history of the last war indicates that great offensives, thrusting long salients into enemy territory, may often be turned into routs by counter-offensives. This was the case at the first and second battles of the Marne, which were decisive. The sole danger to the German action in Poland arose from the possibility that the Poles would successfully use such tactics. If Hitler, becoming impatient, should attempt a direct major invasion of France, the chance of crushing him would be much greater than by the contrary action. If he should violate the neutrality of Belgium or Switzerland, or if Italy should enter the war, there would at once arise the possibility of a war of movement, with Hitler at a disadvantage. Meanwhile siege tactics will wear him down.

We do not venture to predict that this strategy, good as are the arguments that can be made for it, will be that actually adopted. A successful storming of the German citadel would be more popular and would minimize the losses of war by bringing it to an end more quickly. Perhaps the allied armies will find a way to accomplish this. They will scarcely overlook any possible opportunity for it. But we do not believe the experienced French commanders, who are masters of strategy, will attempt it unless they are reasonably sure of triumph. They can afford to wait. At present it seems doubtful that they can afford to attack.

Finis Poloniae

AS THE WAR BEGAN, military experts around the world agreed that the Germans would attempt to conquer Poland within six weeks, and that there was a good chance of their doing so. But even though we were forewarned that the struggle would be short, it came as a shock that Poland was wholly defeated in just two weeks. There was, and probably will be for months to come, much to be done in the way of "mopping up"—as the efficient military phrase has it—but when it became clear on September 15 that the Germans had seized all of Poland's industrial centers and had broken the line on the Vistula in several places, there could no longer be any expectation of pro-

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longed Polish resistance—even if the Red Army had stayed on its own side of the frontier.

Was Poland weaker than most people had thought, or Germany stronger? This question, so heavily weighted with implications as to the future of the war, cannot be definitely answered out of our present scanty knowledge. But certainly we can point to many Polish weaknesses that at least seem to be sufficient reason for the collapse.

One factor may be attributed directly to the Polish government itself. Fortifications were terribly inadequate. Correspondents with the German troops agree that although there were fortifications on the Polish border they were not constructed in depth, but as a line, and that there were no second and third lines to fall back on. People who know the terrain around the Jablunka Pass, through which the Germans attacked from Slovakia, say that the Carpathian mountains make a fine natural barrier there and that a minimum of fortification should have made the pass impregnable, yet it was quickly forced. There have been no reports to indicate that the Vistula line or Warsaw itself were fortified in any but a hurried, last-minute way.

Again, the government may be blamed, at least in part, for the confusion which resulted from the repeated, seemingly unplanned, shifting of the position of both the government and the general staff from place to place. Once the Poles had refused Soviet aid they must have known that they would be fighting a swiftly retreating action—especially since they themselves best knew the state of their fortifications. Yet it is reported that whole corps lost contact with the staff, counter-attacks were uncoördinated and general communications hardly existed at all after the first few days. Even though this condition must be partly attributed to the success of German operations and German espionage, these too were things that a capable government would have reckoned with and planned for in advance.

Certain critics, notably the Soviet Union's Premier Molotov, have emphasized the point that Poland was a semi-fascist country that oppressed her numerous and large minorities, thus preventing the creation of a fighting spirit of patriotic unity such as existed in Spain and Czecho-Slovakia. Yet the Polish troops seem to have fought with great spirit, and though patriotic fervor in the rear would have been needed in a long war, to uphold a people through hungry times, it cannot stop tanks. True, several years of a progressive government, and a renascence of national unity, might have strengthened both the army and the fortifications enormously. They might also have produced an alliance with Soviet Russia. But what the Poles needed badly from September 1 to 15, 1939, were the materials of war and a government that simply knew how to use them. Their government proved to be just as romantic and stupidly blundering at home as its foreign policy indicated it must be.

As for materials of war, we shall know in twenty years why Britain didn't begin last March, when she guaranteed Poland, to strengthen her with loans, arms and technicians. Instead, the British offered a big loan to the Germans and haggled over a little one to the Poles. The Balkan states, seeing what has happened next door, may well wonder if Mr. Chamberlain's guarantee is not about as much use to them as his umbrella would be to a man face to face with a hungry tiger.

Britain and France sent Poland few if any planes, and the Germans ruled the air. If the Allies win the war, it won't prove that they were right in this, and if they lose it won't prove they were wrong. But even more than fighting strength, French and British planes might have contributed combative spirit to the Polish air force. Witnesses on the Rumanian border reported on September 17 that twenty-two of the latest-type Polish pursuit planes flew into Rumania at 500 feet, while German planes at 5,000 feet were bombing a town on the Polish side. German air superiority contributed greatly to the breakdown of Polish communications.

These Polish weaknesses are perhaps enough to account for the surprising speed of the German victory. Everyone knew it would be a victory; it was the internal-combustion motor against the horse, and the horse was licked, as he always has been on the track. "General Mud" didn't even get started. And yet there is small reason to believe that Germany is stronger in arms and organization than was thought a few weeks ago. She is probably stronger in morale than she was then, but her morale has never yet been tested by serious defeat.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

Editors

BRUCE BLIVEN MALCOLM COWLEY R. M. LOVETT
GEORGE SOULE STARK YOUNG

Assistant Editors OTIS FERGUSON ELIZABETH HULING

Contributing Editors

JAMES BENÉT BRUCE BLIVEN JR. H. N. BRAILSFORD
HEYWOOD BROUN JOHN T. FLYNN WALDO FRANK
E. C. LINDEMAN JON. MITCHELL LEWIS MUMFORD
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The War in Washington

What does the coming of war in Europe mean to the New Deal and to the country? Going to Washington to find out is a good deal like plunging into the middle of an army to see how a war is progressing. It looks, on the surface at least, like a huge confusion. Everybody is rushed with his immediate task; there is little time to talk or even to think. Clouds of dust hang over the landscape. Opinions differ; each arm of the service sees things from its own angle. Nothing is as clear and simple as it appears if one merely reads communiqués at a distance and sticks pins in a map. Yet something is happening; in time the broader outlines of the movement will appear.

First of all, it is necessary to understand the sudden shift in the economic factors. The outbreak of the last war closed the stock market and intensified an existing depression; this one, on the contrary, sent speculation and prices shooting up with extreme rapidity, at least for the first ten days. The New Deal, long struggling with low agricultural incomes and a sluggish business system that apparently would not respond to any stimulus, saw prices take wing and soar. Not many have gone very high yet as compared even with post-depression records, but the abruptness of the reversal and the rapidity of the movement are startling.

The government economists are wondering what this portends. They are sure that, at least for the moment, the movement of the markets is based on memories of inflation and shortages of the last war, rather than on any foreknowledge of basic economic factors. In every field there are actual or potential surpluses of commodities. A group of a dozen experts from various departments and agencies, who know as much about the facts as anybody in the United States, could not point out a single commodity in which a real shortage of supply exists, or is likely to come into being as a result of any demand now foreseen.

There are, however, temporary shortages along the line between original source of supply and consumer, caused by low stocks of processed or manufactured goods depleted by a sudden increase in demand. Ultimate consumers, business men and market speculators, if they anticipate a rise in prices, may rush in to buy before it occurs and thus cause the very rise they expect. This kind of thing is called by the economists an "inventory boom." It occurred in 1933, before the NRA went into operation, and again early in 1937. But an inventory boom quickly gives way to recession, as warehouses and shelves are filled up, and as the increases in price encourage larger production without a corresponding increase in the purchasing power of ultimate consumers. We may discover that the anticipated war boom simply does not materialize.

In that case, the problems with which the New Deal has been struggling will remain as before. There will be no need to worry about inflation. It will still be necessary to spend or to encourage investment or to do something else to diminish unemployment. More than ever it will be essential to reduce those industrial prices which are so high that they discourage full production, and, as one measure for doing so, to proceed vigorously with anti-trust action in building and elsewhere.

But there are other possibilities. War demand from Europe and from Europe's former customers, now cut off from their source of supply, may before long grow substantially. The experience of the last war indicates that the change is likely to be, not so much an increase in total volume as a shifting to new types of export. This may have both an unsettling and a stimulative effect. It will not be likely to uncover any basic shortages of materials. But it may develop bottlenecks at critical points. The productive capacity of a given industry for a given type of product may be inadequate, or there may be a lack of a certain kind of skilled labor, or the railroads, unprepared for heavy traffic as they are, may be unable to move goods promptly over a network of wasteful cross-hauls. Thus prices could rise in spots; opportunities for profiteering could develop. And the requirement for specific new types of factories and other capital equipment could give a boost to new investment, to more employment in the capital-goods industries, and thus to a self-accelerating upward movement all along the line. Particularly so, since we were already having a moderate amount of recovery when the war started.

Finally there is a possibility, which cannot be ignored by those who are thinking ahead, that the United States may become involved in the war. Many assume that this is inevitable, whether they want it or not. And it is necessary not to be caught unprepared. Entrance into war would mean an immediate enlargement of orders from our government, which would have the same stimulative effect as a really big program of public spending in time of peace—such a program as the New Deal has never yet been authorized to undertake.

The danger is that anticipation of a war boom, or the preliminary boom itself, will make people think that war will solve all our economic problems and that nothing more is necessary. There is a psychological danger in this view, because it creates a strong current of motives tending to pitch us into the war. This will be true if people are disappointed in the present flurry and if depression returns. It will be all the more true if a large and excited economic interest is built up with a stake in war profit and employment.

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Aside from the psychological effect, war inflation would not solve our economic problems, but make them worse, both now and later. General objectives that are socially desirable remain the same. In both peace and war we want large production of useful goods at low prices, accompanied by a sufficient popular income, not too inequitably distributed, to buy those goods. If we had an economy of abundance, it would be much easier to devote the necessary resources to war without imposing deprivation on the civil population. It would be easier to absorb the war distortion and to demobilize afterwards. It would cost less for the military forces to buy what they need, and they would get their supplies more promptly. Without such an economy, soaring prices, confusion, bottlenecks and tremendous war profiteering would impede all these objectives.

Such a situation would not even favor large production. Conventional economics holds that profits are the bait for production, and hence that you must allow big profits if you want a rapid increase in output. But sufficient profits can be made, as modern industry is set up, without large profit margins on the individual unit. It is volume that counts. Even plant expansion for temporary purposes may be taken care of in some other way, if special provision is made for it. In the last war labor did benefit by full employment—which ought to be normal—but it lost one-third in terms of real wages, while we made thousands of new millionaires. And in spite of war demands, our total physical output did not increase after we entered hostilities. What the subsequent deflation was like, everybody remembers.

Obviously the New Deal ought to mobilize to deal with these problems. Neutrality, possible belligerency, subsequent demobilization whether from neutrality or belligerency and the organization of a peaceful world —these three eventualities all demand planning, and planning of much the same general kind, though the temporary objectives may shift. They are dynamically interrelated. If we mobilize right away to deal with the problems of neutrality we shall be better able both to stay neutral and to fight a war efficiently if we do fight. We shall also be better prepared to go back to a peaceful world and to affect the terms of peace. For, as I wrote last week in The New Republic, we cannot construct a lasting peace without national and international economic planning of the right kind.

It is possible to list a few of the planning jobs that ought to be done right away. First, there is research—not of the everlasting, long-term variety, but of the kind that gives quick, even if not entirely accurate, results. We need to survey the available supplies of all important commodities. Then we need to make a detailed estimate of the changes in export demand that are likely to result from the war. Next, we shall have to match supplies against demand and prepare for any possible shortages, temporary or permanent. We ought to know where bottlenecks are likely to occur in manufacturing and distribution and to prepare against them. Where expansion is necessary, a way of starting it ought to be worked out that will not involve excess profits or post-war commitments. The government has many devices for price control; these should be mobilized and assorted for their appropriate uses.

Important questions of policy and action may arise. For example, it would facilitate the task greatly if the Allies had a unified purchasing agency, with advance schedules of requirements, and if this country had a similar agency to check and plan for the repercussions on our economy. In this and many other respects, prompt decision and action must be taken. The existing departments of the government are in many cases ready for action, but there must be something to coordinate their activities.

The political scene has shifted as well as the economic. A month ago the New Deal was retreating. The question was whether it would survive the next election, in view of the drift to the Right. It was assumed that governmental activities would be curbed and that no new ones would be undertaken. Now, the chance that Mr. Roosevelt will run and be reëlected is enormously increased. It is generally assumed that governmental controls will expand. The question is, who will man the controls? The fight will be waged on a new front—inside Washington. There is a rush of dollar-a-year men to get in on the ground floor.

In this respect, the New Dealers are having a nightmare. They have observed with some apprehension the industrial-mobilization plan of the War Department and the setting up of an advisory War Resources Board consisting largely of big business men. The nearer we drift to a war emergency, the more some sort of emergency control will be necessary. The National Defense Act and other legislation give the President extraordinary powers, not merely if war breaks out, but if a national emergency exists. He has already declared the existence of a "limited" emergency. Will the dollar-a-year men again get command of our economic system, this time from the inside?

The nightmare which the New Dealers foresee has various components. J. P. Morgan may be appointed, not only fiscal agent but purchasing agent for Great Britain. Representing our own military requirements will be a board composed in part of industrialists close to J. P. Morgan, in any event of people with a big stake in industries which will supply the army and navy. Mr. Stettinius of U. S. Steel is its chairman. This board may take over the job of running everything. There will again be big profits and the cartelization of industry, with prices fixed by trade associations of the sellers. Afterwards there will be demobilization of everything except the power of big business and finance.

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I think this nightmare is overdrawn and can be exorcised by the New Deal itself, if it pulls itself together and prepares to do the necessary job. The army and navy have no plot to take over the country; they simply want to be ready to obtain munitions as rapidly and smoothly as possible. If nobody else does anything about prices and profits, they will have to deal directly with the business concerns which make what they want. They are practical men who do not see too far ahead and are professionally unconcerned with social reforms. It is their job simply to make war and prepare for it. The Industrial Mobilization Plan which they have issued has many good points; it is only a suggestion anyway, except in so far as the War and Navy Departments have already organized under it—as they should—in their own purchasing and planning. The real peril arises, not so much from a deep-laid plot as from the danger that by default the control will gravitate to the only people who have been busy drawing up plans and blueprints to exercise it, people who are not alive to the economic and social aims of the New Deal.

There should be, directly under the President, a civilian planning agency to recommend policies, and an emergency agency to decide on them, in relation to the whole economic and social problem. It should be able to act quickly and with authority. Then the war plans could properly be fitted into a broader picture.

Under the new reorganization, an official planning agency exists in the White House staff. It is called the National Resources Planning Board. On paper it is the logical unit to take over the job. It has done little of the kind in the past, but rather long-term research. It has been remote from the center of affairs. It is understaffed and has too little money. Its chiefs are capable scholars, but not executive-minded. Perhaps reliance will be placed upon it in this emergency. Perhaps it will be capable of doing what is necessary. Let us hope so. But it is essential that important preparations be made in this vicinity—and quickly.

The New Deal now faces its greatest opportunity and its greatest risk. Much that it has done so far makes us better able to deal with whatever lies ahead. If it had done a still better job, we should be better prepared. If it can now do what is necessary to cushion the shocks of war and draw nearer to an economy of abundance, it will have won our own war. But if it allows affairs to drift, the tide toward the kind of war and peace wanted by the forces of reaction will set in too strongly to be stemmed.

Washington GEORGE SOULE

Blueprints for a New Society

III: *Guild Socialism, or Bridging the Unbridgeable*

ONE HEARS LITTLE of guild socialism these days: like Rupert Brooke and T. E. Hulme and Tony Wilding, the great Australian tennis player, it was a casualty of the World War. Yet, like other good things the War killed, it is deserving of its occasional hour of tribute; maybe, even, of resurrection. A social doctrine which once enlisted the crusading zeal of Bertrand Russell and G. D. H. Cole, humane men with uncommonly clear minds, cannot be wholly negligible even in radically new circumstances. When American newspapermen created the organization which they called the American Newspaper *Guild*, they paid an unconscious compliment to the British movement which was then all but forgotten. I have heard the word "guild" criticized as being too fancy; "union," so the argument runs, ought to be good enough for reporters if it is good enough for steamfitters. Yet such an argument is evidence of an inverted proletarian snobbery; and newspapermen don't need to apologize. Not only does "guild" connote a respect for craftsmanship, it also connotes a desire to control the methods and issue of one's work against the claims of private employer and State employer alike. As a word, it is stand-up, unservile.

Britons, so the old saw has it, never, never shall be slaves. One sometimes wonders, these days. Yet guild socialism, with its insistence that security without freedom is a six-foot cell, arose as a typically British compromise between the claims of the pre-war Socialists, who wanted to rest their heads forever in the lap of Mother-State, and the 1910 Syndicalists, who had the quaint idea they could snub the state out of existence. As Cole has said, both socialism and syndicalism are right in what they emphasize and wrong in what they exclude. State socialism (and do we know any other?) may get its initial impetus from the trade unions, but it winds up, as in Soviet Russia, with the claims of the community—*i.e.*, the consumers—taking precedence over the claims of individual trade unions, which are forbidden to strike against the terms of the Gosplan. Syndicalism results in the opposite social fallacy: it gives all to the producer (as in the anarcho-syndicalist communal undertakings in Spain), who is thus at liberty to hold up the community as a whole. To a logical people such as the French, the issue might appear insoluble; it is certainly not solved by Georges Sorel and the Revolutionary Syndicalists, who in point of fact were content to rest on a theory of Permanent

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Class War that is very much like Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution. To a logical mind it must seem that man, as both consumer and producer, must be eternally at war with himself, wanting to get more goods for less effort at the same time that other people, organized as the community, want him to get less for more. But the British have never been impressed by logic; they are used to bridging the unbridgeable, as the Statute of Westminster (does it free the dominions?) and the British Crown (is the king a cipher?) both go to prove. And, as we shall see, guild socialism arose as the natural British bridge between the unbridgeable claims of both state socialism and syndicalism. In guild socialism, Marx and Bakunin came to inhabit the same body—a miracle which, but for the World War, might have had a long-shot chance of becoming for radicals what the miracle of Holy Communion is for practising Christians.

To understand the genesis of guild socialism we must go back to England of the very earliest years of this century. The period of revolutionary Chartism and Owenite aspirations toward a milennial socialism had long since been forgotten; the trade unions, organized nationally, had shaken down into "pure and simple" mechanisms for wage-and-hour bargaining; socialist politics had become simple labor politics, an adjunct of British liberalism called lib-labism; and with the passage of welfare legislation of one sort or another political action seemed to promise enough to keep everyone relatively happy. The Fabian Society—organized Sidneywebbicalism, as Mr. Punch called it when contrasting the Webb doctrines of socialist "permeation" with the doctrines of French syndicalism—had long since enlisted the allegiance of most British radicals, including George Bernard Shaw. "The inevitability of gradualism"—how pat the phrase came! Yet, around 1910, something called the Labor Unrest made itself felt, and shortly this Unrest had attained to the dignity of a national bogey. Gold floating up to England from the Rand in South Africa had steadily expanded the British currency; prices had risen; production had increased; but wages lagged steadily behind. Gradualism or no gradualism, British labor stirred; its rank and file listened confusedly to echoes floating across the Channel, echoes of Syndicalist Direct Action; Mr. Tom Mann, who had really read Sorel's "Reflections on Violence," was putting the direct-action gospel to the test in the Scottish and Lancastrian north; and as strike followed strike in the years after 1910 the British middle classes—including the despised "salariat" which refused to take its place beside the proletariat—trembled at the vague possibility of a great general strike. According to George Dangerfield, who has written eloquently of the period, the general strike, Sorel's "vital lie," was actually scheduled for September, 1914, when suddenly the World War intervened. . . .

Meanwhile, some Britishers had been doing a bit of thinking. Not the Sidneywebbicalists, who had done their intellectual pioneering back in the eighties; not the Ramsay MacDonalds and the Philip Snowdens, Socialists who tended secretly to deplore the Unrest; not even the Tom Manns, who were so immersed in the class war that they had no time for the peace conference that must follow all wars. Thought stirred in the mind of Hilaire Belloc, who feared the Servile State notions of both the Sidneywebbicalists and the capitalists, who were more and more shuffling in the direction of a state capitalism that could not have been vastly different from Mr. Webb's desired government by a Bureaucracy of Permanent Socialist Undersecretaries. But Mr. Belloc, who wanted to hand ownership of the means of production back to a wide variety of individuals, could not quite tell Englishmen how they were to slice a corporation like a cake; and his preachments were generally discounted as a Catholic reversionist's nostalgia for an England that had once dressed in Lincoln green. Mr. Belloc's fear of the Servile State, however, found itself echoed in quarters that had no fear of the corporate form of activity known as the trade union; for in the Middle Ages there had been workers' organizations known as guilds which had had full control over their own fate. . . . Why not, so certain Englishmen started to ask themselves, why not let modern industry be controlled by the trade unions reorganized as national guilds? This form of Group Capitalism (it was not called that at the time) would avoid both the uncertainties of private capitalism and the slavery involved in having one employer, the Master State.

Guild-socialist doctrine was pieced together from many seemingly antagonistic sources, from Belloc to Marx, and from William Morris to America's Big Bill Haywood, who believed in industrial unionism. To Mr. A. J. Penty goes the credit for recovering the word "guild," although Mr. Penty, a medievalist, held out for a long time against modern industrialism, which was the thing all the other guildsmen were trying to save by giving it a new direction and a new control. The main driving force behind the idea, however, was French syndicalism as it was filtered through British understanding—specifically, the British understanding of Mr. A. R. Orage and his associates on the New Age and Mr. G. D. H. Cole and the members of the National Guilds League. Bliss was it in that dawn for Mr. Orage and Mr. Cole to be alive; they had not yet succumbed to the acids of age, the one to fall heavily for the Social Credit panacea of Major C. H. Douglas, the other to become (with his wife) a writer of detective stories.

To both Cole and Orage, syndicalist emphasis on the producing interest was a breath of cool air after three decades of Fabian propaganda about the State's being

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a vast association of consumers. Fabian collectivism seemed to exalt man in his average capacity as an eater of food, a wearer of clothes, a taker of baths. Syndicalism, on the other hand, exalted man in his unique occupational characteristics. Pride was all on the side of the syndicalist; after all, a man is far more apt to glory in his ability, say, to hit sixty home runs a year or to do a good job of design than he is to boast of his capacity to eat steak. But pride (which was one of the seven deadly sins in medieval times) can easily become anti-social; and Mr. Cole and Mr. Orage set themselves to computing the exact point at which the producer interest must conform to the demands of sociality, or the consumer-community.

The question of ownership was the biggest nut to crack. If the union, or the national guild, was to own land and capital goods outright, there would be nothing to prevent a scramble on the part of each separate group to get more of the means of production for itself. On the other hand, nationalization of property in the means of production might result in exploitation of the guilds by the State: a governing bureaucracy might decide to set inhuman or at least distasteful work tempos, or to build up an unwanted new investment in plant at the expense of the people's leisure. The guildsmen solved the problem (on paper, at least) by agreeing to vest title to land and capital with the State, but the guilds were to lease this land and capital back for a rent just large enough to cover government expenses. From his niche in Valhalla, Henry George, the Single Taxer, must have applauded this particular dodge that abolished both the unearned increment of private renting and the inequities of a variegated tax system in one clever swoop.

Politically, guild-society structure was to be a combination of vocational, or functional, representation and an old-fashioned regional parliament. A joint council of guild representatives was to be made responsible for the efficient conduct of industry, but the consumer, through parliament, was to set the goals for production. Rates of pay and the total wage bill (to which the pricing of goods was to conform as closely as possible, since the ideal guild price level, the "just price," was supposed to fluctuate around cost-of-production-and-sale) were to be set by the Joint Council and a committee of parliament, subject to revision at intervals. Each separate guild—the miners' guild, the transport workers' guild, the distributive guild, and so on—was to be a democratic, self-governing body, with local councils sending representatives to district councils, and district councils heading up to the national council. Guild membership was always to be open at the bottom, on the principle of first come, first served; if all the guilds were full-up the State would have to support the waiting neophytes. During periods of unemployment or sickness, guild members would continue to draw their pay. Expulsion from a guild was to be made extremely difficult, with an outside court making the ultimate decision. Grounds for expulsion were to be non-political, analogous, say, to the indulgence in unethical practices by a physician. The guilds were to control the "how" of their work—the hours, the tempos, the shop conditions. As to the apportionment of pay, each guild was to receive money in proportion to membership: same size guilds, same size pay. But division of pay within the guild was to be as each individual guild chose: if a guild wanted to reward its members on the share-and-share-alike basis it was free to do so. A guildsman was to be free to save, but his money would gather no interest. Trading, as contrasted with production, was to be under national control, with parliament determining price levels and wage levels and new investment through its control of the national purse. Foreign trading, a matter of barter, was to be a government monopoly. Ordinary private property—homes, pleasure automobiles, small land holdings and petty industry of one type or another—was to be left undisturbed; the guildsmen took that much from Belloc's notion of the Distributive, as opposed to the Capitalist or Socialist State. Socialist demands for the total obliteration of private property were dismissed as "pedantry"; after all, it was the type of property that was important, and the guildsmen were only trying to pull the claws of the plutocrats who were entrenched behind the legal device of the big corporation.

A grand and glorious picture. Whether it was a picture that contained fatal flaws just under the surface pigments, whether the whole doctrine is full of "bugs," we shall never really know. Guild-socialist handling of the problem of investment seems quite vague: after all, money must be issued in the form of wages to cover the fabrication of capital goods, and if guildsmen were to decide to spend that money on consumers' goods instead of saving it at no interest, an inflation would be bound to result. But, since the War, both Communist and Fascist governments have learned how to cancel money issued to create capital equipment that is non-purchasable by the common man; they do it by taxing back part of the total issued "purchasing power," or by forcing the people to buy government bonds. Thus the price level for consumers' goods is kept even. Given a guild-socialist society, the monetary-investment problem would probably be solved through trial-and-error procedure, just as it was solved by Marxist society in Russia and by state-capitalist society in Germany. But the problem of relations between industries competing for the same raw materials would probably be insoluble.

So far as democracy is concerned, "vocational" representation may or may not be a snare and a delusion. Arthur Garfield Hays, in his recent "Democracy Works," argues that it is; in any event, he says, the

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pressure group ensures sufficient vocational representation even under a parliamentary system that bases itself on regional elections. To Mr. Hays's way of thinking, the farm bloc, the beet-sugar lobby and Labor's Non-Partisan League are the American substitute for a vocational parliament to balance the regional parliament. In Russia there was a brief experiment with vocational democracy, and many British guildsmen threw their caps in the air when Lenin proclaimed his slogan, "All power to the Soviets." But the "soviets" of workers and farmers were quickly put under the thumb of the Bolshevik Party, which arrogated to itself the "vocation of leadership" amid the confusions and alarums of the revolution. If the autonomy of the separate guilds were to be established by peaceful means fully covered by the amended law of the land, there is no reason to suppose that a single political party could seize full power in a guild society. A Bukharin, a Rykov, a Tomsky or a Trotsky presumably could find an economic base for political opposition by appealing to one set of guilds against another, or by fighting in parliament over regional aspects of economics (the location of roads, the draining of swamps, the use of Scottish ores as against the Welsh). Whether the establishment of the guild system would tend to choke off new industry is a more serious question: with the mechanism of the free market abolished in favor of a "market socialism," which is only an approximation of the real thing, there would be little incentive to experiment with, say, magnesium alloys at the expense of aluminum, or with plastics at the expense of steel. But even this might be solved by the maintenance of guild laboratories in conjunction with a flexible attitude toward the guilds themselves: the aluminum guild, for example, could be easily expanded to include the magnesium guild, in so far as the latter promised a better product at less expense.

Far more crucial than these "might be's" is the problem of getting from capitalist society to guild society. The English guildsmen used to talk about the method of "encroaching control" of industry, by which they meant the consolidation of union supervision over shop conditions under capitalist society. (The institution of the union-elected checkweighman at the mine head is an example of "encroaching control.") But nothing very much came of this theory of guild-socialist "gradualism"; in all vital matters the capitalists held on to their "rights." During a London building-trades lock-out in 1914, the London Building Industries Federation made a contract with the Theosophical Society to put up a building, and the workers themselves assumed the responsibility for good work (although they refused financial responsibility). This elimination of the capitalist contractor was hailed by guildsmen as a notable advance; and after the War further experiments were made with guilds in the building trades. But guilds found it difficult to get a "collective contract," *i.e.*, the disbursement of a lump sum to the guild itself for a job done, with payment to guild members portioned out as the guild itself voted. The capitalists insisted on keeping control of the wage structure in their own hands; hence the elimination of the middleman in the building industry did not bring about a revolutionary change in the system of rewards.

Since the great here-to-there problem remained incapable of practical solution as long as corporations had the same property rights as individuals, guildsmen gave up trying in the post-war years. It has become more and more apparent, since 1918, that little practical good can come of trying to create a blueprint-perfect society overnight; engineers of social change must work with institutions as they now exist and the future can only grow out of the exceedingly imperfect present. And besides, the problem of keeping even a minimal amount of freedom alive in the face of Fascist "encroaching control" has become so urgent that radicals everywhere must bend their energies to meeting more immediate problems than the constitution of a guild society. They must work to stimulate investment, to expand total production and to raise the level of real wages within the given orbit of capitalism, lest a contracting economic system cry out overwhelmingly for the military rule that is necessary in a state of siege.

Nevertheless, something will come of guild socialism some day. Indeed, something has come of it already. For in so far as the Russians grant economic liberty to groups, they do it along guild lines, permitting the agricultural collectives to control the disposal of at least part of their produce. If Soviet Russia is ever to become a true democracy—*i.e.*, if it is ever to become more Soviet than Russia—it will do it by extending the guild principle. As for the U.S., its heritage from the IWW industrial-union movement continues to push it in a guild-socialist direction. John L. Lewis' forceful but still somewhat inchoate demand for "industrial democracy" is, at bottom, a simple demand for the "encroaching control" of old guild-socialist theory. And who knows? Maybe the CIO, in its quest for plant democracy, will rediscover in action the cardinal principles of guild socialism. As we shall see in a later article, these principles will have to be supplemented by other principles if society as a whole is to be reconstituted along increasingly democratic lines. But a program does not have to be adopted in its entirety to have value; and the guild socialists may still have much to say in a period of partial recrudescence of their aims and desires.

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

This is the third of a series of articles. The next instalment will discuss Distribution, the Coöperative movement, the American "agrarians" and the ideas of Mr. Ralph Borsodi.—THE EDITORS

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The Black Valley Under Glass

News is sweeping through the Black Valley of the lower Allegheny that the Creighton plant of Pittsburgh Plate Glass is closing down. By the middle of October nearly fifteen hundred men and women will have lost their jobs. Within a few months the plant, which less than six years ago was considered the most advanced plate-glass producer in the world, will have become silent and empty—perhaps for good and all. Petitions circulate throughout the borough. The local paper headlines: "200,000 Will Protest Plant Closing." The local union leaders are stunned.

The lower reaches of the Allegheny River enter the industrial area of Pittsburgh thirty miles above the point where the Ohio is born of the conflux of the Monongahela and the Allegheny. Coal tipples, steel mills, aluminum plants, glass works, distilleries and power stations are strung along the flats between the river and the hills. Thirty thousand workers, almost all in basic industries, earn a livelihood from these establishments. Old-timers in the region called it the Black Valley because for a generation they fought unsuccessfully for collective bargaining through the United Mine Workers and the other unions which made sporadic forays into the region. The workers had a tradition of political freedom from the control of "Pittsburgh" (unlike the men and women of Aliquippa and other towns down the Beaver Valley of the Ohio) and the language and philosophy of its union leaders still show a strong Socialist tradition.

But unionism in coal, glass, aluminum and steel came only after the NRA. With the arrival of the CIO in the summer of 1936, organization progressed spectacularly. Now, in spite of depression, there are approximately 26,000 union members in the four basic industries. Unionists no longer call it the "Black Valley," except as an unpleasant but stirring memory.

Soon, however, "Ghost Valley" may be a more appropriate name. The continuous-strip process in the production of steel sheets has displaced men in steel to a point which makes some strip mills look like a moving-picture director's dream of the future of technology. Visitors at the new Irvin mill of Carnegie-Illinois, for example, enter the works through a vast cavern housing immense dynamos manned by a handful of technicians. The effect of the new strip mills upon employment in the older mills has frequently been catastrophic to the communities. In the lower Allegheny Valley, mill after mill has closed down departments and diminished operating forces. Since 1931, employment in this area has been decreased by thousands, not as a result of recession but in addition to the thousands of men cyclically displaced.

Pittsburgh Plate Glass has for two generations been a leader in the industry. Its growth, on the basis of reinvested earnings, has been continuous and vast. In only one year, 1932, has the company lost money. Its losses in that year were $60,737, as compared with profits running from nearly four millions in 1933 to more than eighteen millions in 1937. During this same period the union was successful in boosting wage rates from a minimum of 40 cents and a maximum of 65 cents per hour in 1932 to a minimum of 63½ cents and a maximum of $1.01 in 1937. The union standardized wage rates throughout the various plants of the company and simplified the rate structure by diminishing the number and degree of wage differentials. Because the flat-glass industry is almost 100-percent organized, minimum wage rates have also been made nearly uniform throughout the industry, as well as among the plants of Pittsburgh Plate. It is important to note that although the company suffered both from a serious strike and one of the nation's greatest floods in the winter of 1936-37, its profits in 1937 were the highest in its history.

The story behind the prospective demise of the Creighton plant is the familiar tale of technological change. When shatterproof, laminated glass came into vogue in the automobile industry, the Creighton works, along with other plate-glass plants, was compelled to shift a large part of its production from the making of sheets one-quarter of an inch thick to the making of sheets seven-sixty-fourths of an inch thick. Two of these thin sheets "glued" together compose the now familiar shatterproof windshield. The industry had scarcely adjusted itself to this change when improvements in the production of hot-drawn window glass made possible the substitution of window for plate glass in the making of non-shatterable sheets for the rear and side windows of automobiles. This body blow to the plate-glass industry was followed by the development of case-hardened glass, used increasingly in the rear windows of automobiles.

As a result of these developments, the production of automobile glass has had to be transferred from the plate-glass works of Pittsburgh Plate to its window-glass plants in Clarksburg, West Virginia; Mt. Vernon, Ohio; and Henrietta, Oklahoma. That the union is not responsible for this transfer is attested by the fact that these three window-glass plants are also completely unionized.

At a meeting of the Businessmen's Association of Tarentum and Vicinity, a petition was drawn up to which thousands of signatures are now being affixed (the petition is being circulated from house to house on every street), begging the company at least to share

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production equally among its three plate-glass plants so that the Creighton works will not be irrevocably closed. The company has replied with a public statement that there is no final decision in the matter; that resumption of operations depends upon revival of automobile-industry demands. But everyone knows—along the valley—that that was what was said when the Ford glass plant closed down. It is believed to be a manner of softening the blow. Plants are never officially closed these days, any more than wars are declared.

WPA projects have been cut to the bone. "It used to be lousy with WPA projects here, although we never had enough to really take up the slack. Now that appropriations have been cut, we've only one project left. Applications for direct relief were going up fast even before the glass shutdown took place."

Union leaders say that it is not only a problem which affects every man, woman and child in the community, but that it can only be solved upon a nationwide basis. Bitterness against the company is momentary. "Production, purchasing power and employment *must* be expanded throughout the nation. Purchasing power must be expanded by government action: social security, old-age pensions, a housing program. The reinvestment process must be started. If business can't do it, the government must.

"We don't want you to think that we are communists, because we are not. We've done everything we can think of and if you think it's been fun for the last six years you ought to try it. We're just beginning to wonder how much longer we can keep it up."

R. R. R. BROOKS

The Spanish Exiles in Mexico[1]

THE CRASH of a mightier calamity has erased the possible alternatives for the Spanish refugees in Mexico. The organizations are now, for the moment—and it may be a long moment—paralyzed. There will be no further Spanish immigration into Mexico, Chile or any other country of the New World. The hundreds of thousands who remain in French concentration camps will now be disposed of at the pleasure of Premier Daladier, perhaps in the French army and perhaps under conditions not greatly different from those which now obtain. In view of the extraordinary amount of false information that has been disseminated in Mexico and the United States about the Spanish Republican refugees who have already arrived here, it would be well to give a few exact figures from the registers of the SERE, the organization which has so far cared for them all.

There are less than 6,000 refugees in Mexico. They arrived on the following ships in the following numbers: "Siboney," three trips, 72 refugees; "Mexico," three trips, 18 refugees. And in one trip each, as follows: "Iseri," 7; "Orizaba," 16; "Flandre," 312; "Orinoco," 41; "Leeream," 18; "Monterey," 6; "Iberia," 42; (collective emigration) "Sinaia," 1,620; "Ipanema," 998; "Mexique," 2,200.

The total number of refugees brought in twelve ships (sixteen shipments) is therefore 5,618. This should dispose of the Fascist propaganda widely circulated in the United States, in certain clerical newspapers and by mail, to the effect that fifteen or twenty or twenty-five thousand Spanish "Red soldiers" have come to Mexico. There are soldiers among these men, of course, some hundreds of ex-soldiers of the Spanish Republic. But there are also a large number of civilians, intellectuals, women and children. There are 1,070 families (women and children). There are 1,460 unmarried men and 45 unmarried women. There are 685 refugees less than fifteen years of age. There are 496 men registered as intellectuals, 782 registered as factory workers, 706 registered as agricultural workers and 276 who are carried on the books as without profession. The total number, 5,618, represents a selection made at the Mexican Legation in Paris, partly on the basis of suitability for emigration, but mainly on the basis of the danger incurred by these persons. (In short, these 5,618 are people who would be shot if they were sent back to Spain.)

Of the 706 peasants who came over, 600 are already employed in various parts of Mexico on the land. The rest are still without work. Of the remaining refugees, hardly any have found even part-time work. The highest figure of employment reached among non-agricultural workers is 15 percent.

The money which paid the passages of these refugees came in part from the funds of the SERE, Negrín's organization, which disposes of some remnants of the Republican government's money abroad. Money also has been contributed by the English, French and American committees in aid of the refugees. At present the refugees in Mexico receive one peso fifty centavos per day for food, a very modest subsidy which is provided by the Comité Tecnico de Ayuda, the representative in Mexico City of the SERE. This committee is headed by Dr. José Puche, formerly rector of the University of Valencia. Shelters are provided in camps and private hostels arranged for by the SERE. In spite of all the propaganda that has been put forth, on the subject—which aims to show President Cárdenas as importing a "Red army" at Mexican government expense, for unknown purposes—the Mexican authorities

[1] This is the second of two articles on the Spanish Republicans. The first appeared in our issue of September 6.—THE EDITORS

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have in fact given nothing toward the support of the Spanish refugees beyond free transport over the government railways from Vera Cruz to the points at which they have been temporarily sheltered.

The situation of the refugees is bad. In Mexico City, where the cost of living is higher, it has been found impossible to sustain life on less than two pesos fifty centavos a day for food. The Spaniards, unfamiliar with the country, do not manage to live—as Mexicans do—on nothing. The subsidy of one peso and a half which was fixed for each refugee has therefore had to be increased for those who are in Mexico City. And in view of the slowness of all arrangements here, the coolness of the Mexican labor unions and popular opinion towards the Spaniards, the Negrín-Prieto feud with its consequent paralysis of effort, an unfortunately large proportion of the refugees (some 2,500, I believe) have concentrated in Mexico City because they have nowhere else to go.

Mexico is the only country that has opened her doors more or less freely to the Spanish Republicans. Chile accepts some immigration, but carefully selected by profession—which is not much good to a man who is in danger of being shot by the Fascists. Cuba has also accepted a few; Santo Domingo, within the limits of its possibilities, has been very generous. But Mexico, or at least her President, had been willing up until the past three weeks to accept a large number of immigrants, and the number tentatively fixed by the SERE as likely to be sent to Mexico was 30,000. This has all ceased now; the future of the refugees who are already here is extremely obscure.

Negrín's local representatives have been working as hard as they can. They have succeeded in buying a large hacienda in the state of Chihuahua, called Santa Clara, upon which 1,200 Spanish families can in time be settled. Two smaller haciendas in Michoacán have been acquired for a few hundred more settlers. But the intellectuals and those who have no special training are in particularly difficult straits. At present they live on their subsidies from the Negrín government; but who knows how long this can last? With the situation now obtaining throughout the world, these funds may cease to flow to Mexico altogether, as they have now ceased temporarily, and the sums on deposit here will not long provide for the unfortunate Republicans who have crossed the ocean.

Graver, or at least larger, concerns have captured the mind of the whole world just now. But the plight of the Spanish Republican refugees must also interest all those who believe, as I do, that the Spanish Republic saved the world from Fascist domination by its heroic resistance during two and a half years—years during which the democracies awoke to their danger. These people, who are not a "Red army" but a collection of men, women and children who have suffered greatly in a cause which involved the world at large, are now in extreme likelihood of being stranded in Mexico. The President of Mexico has been generous in admitting them, but the Mexican political parties have made their arrival the pretext for an outrageous propaganda of untruth, and the general reception of the refugees by the population cannot be described as warm. If there are people who relate the present to the past, and both to the possible future, the refugees who have come to Mexico will not be wholly forgotten in the overwhelming disasters of the day. Here are doctors who are without instruments or books, intellectuals without any of the means of work, and workers of all kinds who are extremely unlikely to find employment in the Mexican economy. While Europe plunges on to the ruin which might so easily have been avoided a year or so ago—the ruin which the Spanish Republic fought to avert—these victims of the monstrous policies of 1938 are left to contemplate, from their misery and exile, the exact results which they foresaw and which they did their utmost to ward off from a threatened world. It may be hoped that their friends in America, at least, will not forget.

Mexico City VINCENT SHEEAN

Speech to the Winds

No one comes
under these pines

Hawee, wind! Ho!
blow! be lions with manes like fire of ice
clearness, flagging and snapping! be
bold, blow! scare winter from these pines,
scatter the winter whistlers, the
mockers whose malice contrived the ice!
scatter the ice-cave whisperers,
who hedge the heart that seeks an egress
from winter-locked days, these hills!
scatter those who block eye's seeking of a way
from winter and from death. Be
bold! blow! blow the ice and the dark
from amongst these pines, the lurking
sigh.

Hawee, wind! Ho!
Stand on this hill! Wind, wind,
you cannot find such hills
waiting for blossoms and birds farther.
What have the seas' hills
with blossoms or with birds? Wind:
stay.
—The mind has such hills,
the heart such gaunt heights:
come! bring them leafage! Oh,
bring birds!

Be meek, be gentle.
Here: eat from my hand.
See: I lift up my hand. Alight, wind—
like birds!

RAYMOND E. F. LARSSON

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Washington Notes

The Peace-Party Republicans

BY ALL SIGNS, the Republican philosophy in the coming special session will be an odd variation of that of Mr. Martin Dies's Demagogues' Club. The Diesian creed was: "Never vote for a tax bill nor against an appropriation bill." Apparently the Republicans mean to be in favor of a wild war boom, but against this country's going to war.

The earnestness of the isolationist group, Senators Borah, Nye, Johnson, Clark, may be granted. Even Mr. Vandenberg is entitled to the benefit of doubt. But it seems clear that the official Republican leadership of House and Senate has no wish to uphold the present Neutrality Act, and thus do a psychological, and perhaps practical, injury to the country's infant war boom. But simultaneously it is their plan to dazzle the voters into thinking that the Republicans form the peace party.

Observers assume that Mr. Borah or Mr. Nye, in all innocence, will thunder that a vote to change the Neutrality Act is a vote to throw us into the Second World War. Upon which, the Republican leadership will oppose all attempts to shut off debate, will defend the right of the isolationists to speak long and often. The Republicans are doubtless right in thinking that Mr. Roosevelt will be embarrassed by a sustained isolationist attack. He is no isolationist, but he does not want prematurely to attract the opposition of isolationist voters.

After Messrs. Borah, Nye and their colleagues have done their stint, observers predict that the Republicans, as a party, will raise the issue of national unity. They will ask that, in the name of unity, they be invited to the White House and taken into Mr. Roosevelt's confidence. Since neither Mr. Roosevelt nor Mr. Hull will voluntarily sit in the same room with Mr. Hamilton Fish, ranking Republican on the House Foreign Affairs Committee and Herr von Ribbentrop's confidant, it is hoped that the administration will again be embarrassed.

After these and similar practical jokes, the Republican leadership is expected to get down to cases. It will let it be known that it is not unwilling to authorize the export of airplanes to the Allied powers—"never vote against a war boom"—but it means to see to it that the administration will not send American boys to France—"never vote for war." A Republican substitute measure will then be unveiled, possibly the same Vorys amendment that so infuriated Mr. Roosevelt last spring, and Mr. Roosevelt will be invited to accept it or face a prolonged Senate fight. If Mr. Roosevelt agrees, the Republicans will take credit for the war boom among business men, and, among isolationist voters, credit for keeping the country out of war.

This is typically the democratic process, which it sometimes seems hardly worth saving the world for. However, it is likely that the Republicans are at least partially sincere. In the last few days, the business-men supporters of the party have reminded Republican leaders that the "good" years of the previous World War were 1915 and 1916. When this country became a belligerent in 1917, and when the Wilson administration imposed wartime corporation and personal income taxes, the stock market fell flat on its face and remained prone almost until the Armistice of the following year. More than one business envoy to Washington has muttered: "And think of the tax bill this New Deal crowd will whip up." The Republicans oppose our entry into the present war until after November of each year, and only then if their side takes the election.

But Republican horseplay is unimportant. When Messrs. Borah and Nye charge that a vote to change the Neutrality Act is a vote to put us into war, they are probably telling the truth. Among observers here, Mr. Nye's munitions investigation of 1934-35 is accepted as the nearest thing we have to a realistic guide to the future. Most students of that investigation agree that the boom of 1915-16 provided the psychological climate needed for our entry into the War. It is not necessary to believe the silly "merchant-of-death" stories that became a fad at the time of the investigation. What was dangerous were high farm prices, high industrial wages and profits.

Ever since the Nye investigation, students have believed that, in order for us to stay out of another war, we would need to ration exports. That is, the sales abroad of farmers and business men would have to be restricted to the amounts they sold in the immediately preceding years of peace. Only in this way could our economy be insulated from war prosperity. If this is true, then we are lost. No leader of national standing is prepared to back a program remotely resembling this. Secretary Wallace publicly exults over prospective war sales of our farm surpluses. Even isolationists like Messrs. Borah and Nye will not try to keep war profits from farmers, the rural banker and storekeeper. For voters in general, the Second World War has started in a strange, terrible, euphoristic haze, bringing back good times.

In the uprush of commodities since the war's beginning on September 3, you may have noticed that the advance of rubber was relatively mild. Tin had advanced, but forward contracts are at normal levels. The State Department is justly proud of the behavior of these commodities. Grueling hours were spent in rapid-fire negotiation with London. It is understood here that the State Department has received pledges that England will prevent war profiteering in both rubber and tin, will arrange shipping facilities for rubber—at least to an agreed-on Far East depot—and will guarantee smelting capacity for tin. These are immense economic favors the British government has done us. The unanswered question is what favors will be expected from us in return. Behind the war of soldiers there has now begun a war of money. The great financial weight of England will be applied to the masked German business agencies that undoubtedly exist in neutral countries. English money will be used to prevent goods flowing into Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, that might later reach Germany. The problem will not be so great as it was in 1914-18, for Germany now has a negligible store of foreign exchange and gold. But observers predict that it will be in this sector that the United States will first coöperate with the Allies in Mr. Roosevelt's measures short of war.

Delighted New Deal aides have spread the story that Mr. Roosevelt has advised the British government not to again appoint J. P. Morgan and Company its fiscal and

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purchasing agents. The advice was sensible. For the purpose of creating pro-English sentiment among the mass of voters here, the House of Morgan should be kept out of sight. But the story, and the New Dealers' pleasure in retelling it, throw a bright light on the degree of neutrality that exists in inner New Deal circles. In 1914-17, the English government had Ambassador Page to help them influence American opinion; in this war they seem to have done much better.

Washington T. R. B.

Other People's Money

War—It's Wonderful!

IT HAS BEEN SAID that the tory learns nothing and forgets nothing. But apparently this is not entirely true. They do learn a little—a fraction of the truth, just enough to get them into trouble. The last war, for instance, had its lessons for business. They learned to their delight what historians had known for ages, that war can be a perfectly wonderful thing for profits. That, seemingly, they remember. What they have not learned is the other part of the story—that it is very difficult to hold on to the profits they make out of war.

Therefore when the war trumpet sounded off in Europe, instantly the speculators, gambling on a long war and big profits for the munition-makers and the industries which will supply the Allies, rushed into the stock and commodity markets and boosted the prices of stocks and grains and metals in the most encouraging manner. It will be interesting to watch the comedy from this point on.

If you would see this strange imperviousness to history at its best, behold the following. Mr. Charles Sawyer was the Democratic candidate for Governor of Ohio last fall. But he is also and primarily a successful lawyer and insurance man. On Tuesday he visited the White House. As he emerged, after observing that public sentiment was "rapidly shifting on the Neutrality Act," he emitted the following gem:

"Why should factories be built in Canada while men are walking the streets in this country looking for jobs? You don't think the Allies will sit idly by if we won't fill their orders because of the embargo? They can build factories in Canada, which has resources almost as great as our own, and use those factories to fill the orders which this country has rejected."

There is a paragraph which has the quality of honesty, even if it is a little dumb. No gibberish about saving the democracies here. As a matter of fact, they don't need us. They can build what they need in Canada. What we should do is to get in on the trade to keep Canada from getting it—Canada whom we love so much that we must go to war in order to save her from invasion from somebody or other. We must do it to put our idle men to work. This is the honest part of it. The dumb part is that if Canada builds factories to supply Europe—and if the United States, for that matter, expands them to supply Europe—the result will be a dead loss to either. All we have to do is to look at what happened in the last war. Go into New England and consult the history of the Winchester Arms and Remington Arms companies which thought they were rolling in prosperity in the last war and have never been the same since.

A short war—I mean a war lasting a year—will bring this country no profit. It will help a few industries, but it will hurt as many as it helps. A war boom of any proportions will develop very slowly. If anyone doubts this let him look at the figures for the last war boom.

The Great War began in August, 1914, so that 1914 included five war months. Here is a statement of the American exports of a group of commodities which benefited by the War. The figures show the exports to Great Britain for the peacetime year of 1913 and the year 1914 with five war months:

	1913	*1914*
Cotton (bales)	3,566,000	3,439,000
Iron (tons)	22,576,000	17,612,000
Steel ingots (lbs.)	152,000,000	25,280,000
Gasoline (gals.)	6,050,000	25,803,000
Copper (lbs.)	102,000,000	135,000,000

Only two—copper and gasoline—showed increases. The others actually declined. If we take the exports of copper, coke, pig iron and steel, including steel shapes and plates, to England and France together, we find that even by the end of 1915 the total of exports to those two countries was not yet as high as in 1913. Besides that, there was the loss of trade to Germany and other countries. A war boom did develop. But it took time. It will take time now. I have been pointing to the slow development of this war boom for over a year. But I have had no illusions about the speed with which it would grow. Against such increases as appear at first must be balanced the losses. Steel, copper, even grains, perhaps, may pick up. But cotton will not—on the contrary it will be injured. And worse, the cotton-textile industry will be injured as well as the wool industry, which will immediately be deprived of its sources of supply in Australia. Wool prices soared here, as did prices of burlap and other commodities. But this simply meant that industries dependent on wool and burlap were being cut off from their supplies in Australia and Calcutta.

Therefore we may conclude that while some industries will be benefited moderately in the first year of the war, others will be damaged severely and that, on balance, the war will bring to the nation's economy as a whole no great benefits the first year. The only way these gamblers can win their wagers is through a long war.

But meantime, strangely enough, politicians—even more than business men—are flirting with the possibilities of the war putting men to work. The hope of a balanced budget in an election year through the prosperity of the war industries is too overpowering to be resisted. Not all are as frank as Mr. Sawyer of Ohio. Most of them talk about aiding the democracies. But the democracy they really think will be aided by it most is the democracy that will have a candidate for President in the field next year. Men will be at work, they think, and, in order to create the illusion of American unity before the world, we shall be asked not to discuss our own grave economic problems. War! Ain't it wonderful! JOHN T. FLYNN

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Love Among the Ruins

IN THE FIRST of these two notes on the exhibition of Old Masters at the World's Fair, I mentioned, among other virtues and defects, the very unfortunate lack of markings for the paintings, so that you not only must buy a catalogue but be badgered with using it; and the sop, shall we say, thrown visitors in the shape of guides gratis. There are several guides, the tours are not drawn out and come at frequent intervals so that the mechanism of convenience is notably observed. By chance I heard only one of the guides, though I heard that lecture, in parts at least, a number of times. On the whole the impression was of admiration, love, demolition, social comment, causes, as if on the whole the Old Masters had been beloved but a bit knocked about.

The number wishing to be guided was in every case very considerable—in a room like El Greco's most of them—whatever they might hear—could have seen only the ceiling. The guide was a young lady, most attractive, alert, tactful, unabashed, and with an air of being genuinely interested—so that there is no personal criticism in these remarks. I have been thinking—not for the first time in this matter of guides for art galleries—of the situation and the problem to be figured out. In some European galleries there are paid guides of various levels, or specialization, according to the amount of time the employer has, or his plan or the degree of his interest. But here the democratic element—in contrast to the undemocratic refusal to mark the paintings—allows for all sorts of people, a great mixture all equal before the law, perhaps, but certainly not equal before Titian, Holbein and Mantegna. How, in the name of all the gods at once, then, could we go about it, given the mixed crowd, the distraction, the time limit, and this particular exhibition? But go about it we must, evidently. At least one way, the historical approach, would of course recommend itself to "the trained mind"—doubly so here where the special range of the show is in the history of painting. But doing it historically must include also—what is practically impossible—something of the history of technique; otherwise we drop to a babble of sheer anecdotes and dates that does a lot of harm by providing a substitute for the eye and confusing the whole issue as to the nature of art.

At any rate, whatever way, historical, pastoral, comical, comical-historical, we do this itinerant lecture on so vast an exhibition, the way I heard it done was appallingly wrong. There were a few spots both useful and engaging—most of the lecture was lively and really engaging, there's that bouquet for it—but the whole approach was, to put it mildly, only personal and arbitrary. The fact that personality and slapdash are just now more acceptable as criticism than once is neither here nor there except as journalism: the hearers are used to it and may be engaged by it. I must be unfair to the speaker herself and to some of what she said, and record a very few items illustrating the calamity of the system, and the casualness implied, or indifference, misguidedness or cynicism among the directors of the exhibition.

Item: In the gallery with paintings by Titian, Veronese, Tintoretto—To pause at the "Adoration of the Magi" and mention the Venetians' use of landscape as against the Florentine. Also their color. But not subtle. To turn then to—and from—the picture beside it—Titian's portrait of himself—with some observation about its showing, or not showing, I forget which, his dissipated or gay or some such life. . . . What good can come thus for such listeners? "Not subtle," flung off into the air like that? Out of the few precious moments allowed, one point, Titian as a rounder.

Item: In the French gallery, eighteenth-century and early nineteenth, a large room, well packed with canvases, to go almost straight to a stupid Fragonard oval of a woman's upper half, with none of Fragonard's brush in it, dry in tone, in the style for his ceiling paintings, and make a dash at this painter as "just superficial." To pass quickly to Madame Vigée-Lebrun's portrait of the Princesse de Talleyrand, see how superficial! To go to a David portrait—that of the Marquise d'Orvilliers, if I remember right—and say something about real, not just superficial, and how this is what painting was after the Revolution! Then on to the next gallery.

Meantime right across the room—not to speak of "Le Billet Doux," and all the *tour de force* that Fragonard put into it—is one of the finest of all Fragonards: "L'Etude," and one of the chief treasures of the Louvre—in the Louvre's opinion of course—and whether we prefer that style or not, a dazzling performance. It could not be so easily fitted into the social-revolution motif—or current cliché—which in a way is greatly helped by dwelling on that other Fragonard, dull, dry, perfunctory. As for the David portrait, sincerity, reality and so on—difficult, dangerous terms in art, needing in every case much time for their definition—we may note that many of David's post-Revolution sitters were led to him by the same thin and modish hunger that in another state of things would have led them to Drouais, Fragonard, Vigée-Lebrun. The David portion of the guide's comments, however, is more than supported by the concluding sentence of the "Introduction to the Exhibition," by Mr. Alfred M. Frankfurter, who states that in David's art "lies the digest and clarification of the esthetic experience of the previous four centuries, an unchanging basis for the artists of the world today and tomorrow." (Which reminds me of a sculptor I heard once making an address, who said, "My friends, I give you my word, we are immortal!") If he can go on like that, why should not this young lady?

Item: To stop at the very fine small Patinir of "Rest on the Flight into Egypt" and remark that he is the first painter to be interested in landscape (or the same as to peasants and Breughel the Elder) represents a method with a certain natural, popular appeal, but the point involved is usually too debatable to serve anything. Giorgione, for instance, is a trifle earlier if anything than Patinir, and in "The Tempest" his landscape is quite as dominant as in this Patinir.

In this young guide's comments you recognize of course many echoes from studio talk, schools, art discussion, current theories, etc., provided, that is, you happen to be familiar with these. Most visitors to the Old Masters are not; they are plain American citizens, and what these allusions, thrusts, clichés and personal preferences mean to them would be hard to say.

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Under such circumstances as rule at the Fair, the one and only thing to do, if you must put forth guides, is to provide them all with a more or less uniform discourse, built on a mildly historical pattern—the galleries follow that scheme anyhow—but above all doing one main thing, which is to stick to the most notable, in some instances the most celebrated, of the paintings, and, I should say, to dwell most on excellence or perfection, or in some cases what has been so considered. In so brief a discussion, undoubtedly, and very likely under such circumstances, there is not time for the other method. If the guide delivering this comment has the charm, liveliness and air of conviction that the young lady of these notes has, then so much the better.

STARK YOUNG

Pay-Off on Odets: I

THE PRACTICE of reviewing plays in book form is a dangerous one, for it is never possible to shake completely the habit of seeing the printed page as something final, as complete as it ever will be. Whereas a play is a play only in its theatre minute, with all its intangibles assembled. You can guess at effects, visualizing, hearing in the back of your head; but that is as far from the experience of color, sound, depth, motion and stage rhythm as imagining cool water is from diving into it. The playwright is a mainspring in this delicate assembly. But you do not tell time by looking at a mainspring, and weak plays may be hopped up or strong plays ruined by other factors.

Along with the movie release of "Golden Boy," Random House has brought out—both in the $2.50 reprint line and in their new and handsome Modern Library format—"Six Plays of Clifford Odets." This makes a fine chance to look Odets over as a playwright—*only* if we can manage to remember that these are the bones not the flesh, and that to judge a playwright by the standards of the novel is never fair and often disastrous. Some of the writing in the plays is absurdly immature, a good deal of it is florid. At times he seems to be going somewhere until he gets there. And he never discarded a theme simply because it was the hot stuff of the moment.

But through the six plays one thing is clear: Clifford Odets can do just about what he wants to, because he has the right eye—what he has seen makes a storehouse of vivid people and things and action from the immediate world—and because he has theatrical genius. He is a poet too, of course, and along with Shaw, Kober, Weidman he has tapped a source of homely poetry in Jewish family life. But better poets have written god-awful plays. And very few playwrights have so consistently managed the explosive comment, the juxtaposition of varied types, the rising expectation, the unexpected in a flash, which give even his sermonizings theatre motion. He simply has the gift: his imagination goes in all directions at once, and his selective dramatic sense tells him which of the ways can be brought together to the most effective cross purpose.

Then, too, there is a sense of humor, which makes as delightful an encounter in the theatre as it does in life. This is rarely used purely for gags, and it is never segregated to the chronic buffoon or the comic-relief scene. His people have a jumping appreciation of image that is as natural to them in pain or anger as in horseplay, and is therefore a better seated humor. It is possible that some of the vitality on his stage as a whole comes directly from this vivid trick of living speech.

There is also that relish for the different odd people you meet around, without which character in its fullest sense is not created, but cut out and pasted on a wall. In six plays there is a fine gallery of types—very often the Jewish momma, the poetic Jewish youth, etc., but in addition a wide range of figures whose mere presence and meaning in a scene heightens its intensity, sometimes even its suspense. Add these several traits of the craftsman and his personal equipment together, and things are bound to happen on the stage. With Odets they happened so easily that the over-all dramatic meaning and cohesion could be very shaky and still get by. This is not all to the good, and I am not sure it is getting better with experience.

Clifford Odets' success came in the early thirties, when all you had to do was open with "Workers of the world . . ." and close with "ARISE!" and you had powerful nay biting dramah. Success came so hot and heavy that there was no chance for blight on his solemn and flourishing conviction that he was the Shakespeare of the class struggle. His "Waiting for Lefty" was a smashing piece of stagecraft (one of the most striking devices of any theatre is the line of denunciation: "He's my own lousy brother!"). But by comparison with Bengal's later "Plant in the Sun" it suffers from haste and disunity: that ragbag of current social dicta thrown in as blackouts, that Maxwell Anderson posy-poetry (no one ever wrote better satire on Odets at his worst than Odets did in this play: "Christ, Baby! I get like thunder in my chest when we're together"). "Till the Day I Die" was even hastier, and the only complete blank he has drawn. It is still rather naïvely credited to a letter from Germany that the playwright read in The New Masses, and sounds like it.

At the time these were written there was the excitement all around of ground being broken, the underdogs of society coming into their dramatic own, etc.; and since the choice of subject was all one needed to be a dramatist, you can hardly blame Odets, who was already a dramatist, for wanting to get on. He wanted to do bigger things and presently went to Hollywood, and thereby ceased to be the Little Jesus of the proletarian theatre: but the footless adulation (and the silly and interminable reprimands for defection from people like Richard Watts) had done nothing to make him look over his equipment.

"Awake and Sing" was already behind him—so far as I know the first and best thing of its kind, written straight out of what he knew, a tough, lean play about a Jewish family in the depression, with an ending that was logical but happy only if happiness can be so hard-bitten. But in "Paradise Lost," using somewhat the same material, he ran foul of a need for thesis. He had shown beautifully how various middle-class people—small merchants with both good and black hearts, a Jewish momma, a sick boy, a broken athlete, a small-time gangster, a wild daughter, a putterer, a sort of Wobbly type—were carried the way the stream was going, downward, and out of their depths. But then to show that out of middle-class decay will be born et cetera, he brings on one of the most unlikely endings and fuzzy perorations of all. It doesn't pass even

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among the fireworks of actual theatre performance; and in print it holds water like so much chicken wire.

The balance of this article will have to wait until next time. OTIS FERGUSON

The Bandwagon

Pressed for interpretation, both Foreign Office and Propaganda Ministry officials responded "It is not for us to interpret as plain a speech as that of [Goering]." Besides, they added, they would have to study the official text carefully. – *A. P. dispatch in The New York Herald Tribune.*

During today's sessions, the psychologists heard Oscar Kaplan of the University of California assert that while the life span of idiots and imbeciles is brief as a rule, they seem to live longer in California than elsewhere in the country. – *From a news note in The San Francisco Chronicle.*

Coat of Male

CRISIS TO DECIDE VOGUES—FIRA BENENSON HOLDS MODE IS "STEM TORSO"—MISS CARNEGIE SEES CORSETS OVERRATED.—Mme. Lilly Daché, a New York millinery designer, declared yesterday on her return from Europe that the present trend in women's fashions could be attributed to some degree to woman's desire to prevent war. "The 1939 collections prove that women are afraid of war and are using their most potent weapon, clothes, to prevent it, by appealing to men's protective instincts," Mme. Daché said. – *News item in The New York Times.*

Servants' Exit

Mrs. M. C. duPont of Wilmington, Del., was one of the passengers. She had been grouse shooting in Scotland. Her chauffeur, her maid, her car and her luggage were all on board the torpedoed "Athenia" and she said she did not know if her servants had been saved.

"I originally intended to sail on the 'Athenia' myself," she said. "However, I thought the 'Athenia' was a Canadian ship and that it would be better to sail on a neutral one." – *From a news item in The New York Times.*

She's Practically in Congress

"You haven't noticed that people are starving and men are unemployed and that I'm bored to death. . . ."

"I don't see why I should be interested in some silly people who don't interest me in the least. As far as that other business of not working, there's always the WPA, whatever that is."

I had to admit that she showed signs of intelligence. – *From a serial story by Guy Pierrepont, in The Brooklyn Heights Gazette.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column and $1 will be paid for each item used. Address The Bandwagon, care of The New Republic. Please enclose the original clipping. – THE EDITORS

Correspondence

The Error Is in the Living

SIR: We're in The War. Neutrality, embargo, et cetera, all hooey. Talk. Large events, involving large numbers of people, large sums of money, large words, create mobs; mobs are uncontrollable. Anything sensible anybody can do has got to be personal. The hysteria is contagious and affects everybody. Recognize the reality of a thing, and you're a part of it. And nobody can avoid recognizing the reality of this war. The rest is a question of time. We think we know who's wrong and who's right. That's more hooey. They're all wrong. We're wrong, too, and whatever we do will be wrong. The error is in the living. The Germans constitute a part of the living; the French, the British, the Polish, the Italians, the Americans too. No way out, except theoretically. It's too late; always has been. The race needs infinity in which to correct the heritage of error. Infinity is never an ailment of any generation or any era. Ivory tower? Sure, what the hell else?

San Francisco, Calif. WILLIAM SAROYAN

Who's to Lose?

[We give as promised a report on the little flurry of mail that followed our analysis of the Stalin-Hitler pact of August 22. Out of thirty-eight letters, twenty-six were very much alike in tone and length, that is, rather warm and very long. Starting out by telling us we were mistaken, they said in effect, Let me explain you Europe. They then explained, 1, 2, 3, 4, and came to the now familiar conclusion that Stalin did the best he could for World Peace. There were three neutrals, who thought that communism had taken a shellacking as an ideology but that Russia was doing the best that could be done for Russia. The ten letters in favor of our explanation were more brief, and some of these ran over into an it's-about-time-you-woke-up-to-reality note that suggested congenital anti-Soviet bias. S. M. Thompson of Baltimore, Maryland, reported that his friends around the office liked to read The New Republic when he began bringing it in, but gradually found our support of Soviet policies too much to swallow; H. Watson of West Shokan, New York, said on the other hand that as a representative of "some of the farmers around here," he thought we didn't give Russia enough of a break. His friends had got so disillusioned with the conniving of European diplomacy that they were willing to give the USSR the benefit of the doubt. Other sidelights on the main issue appear below. – THE EDITORS]

. . . And the Poles—what skunks their rulers are—did they not line up with Hitler a few months ago to grab and devour their part of Czecho-Slovakia? My sympathy is with the ruled in Poland, not with the rulers. And after all, is it so inconceivable that the German people and the Russian people may find a permanent lasting basis of mutual friendship and trade?

Oakland, Calif. J. A. EASTON

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. . . France, England and Poland did not and do not want the assistance of Russian troops. Russian troops have not marched in to help Germany. We have no reason to suppose they will.
St. Paul, Minn. W. M.

. . . Many American liberals failed to understand the basic relationship among the dictators of all countries; and only a Stalin's "Munich" could bring them to their senses.
Cleveland, O. SIDNEY YELLEN

. . . No treaty is necessary for sending planes and ammunition to a nation that is invaded. Odd that Chamberlain, Daladier and Bonnet forgot about Russia's help to Republican Spain, and their own non-intervention.
Oakland, Calif. HELEN BURROUGHS

. . . I fear that your statement—that many who formerly looked to the USSR as a force for world peace and democracy would now turn away from her—is far too true; at the same time I violently disagree with your analysis of the effects of the pact. I think that the pact was Russia's triumph.
Atlantic City, N. J. M. L. KEEN

. . . If the trials and purges in Russia could not completely alienate the fellow travelers, I don't see how this change of front can do more to alienate them. Those of us who have long since been alienated have understood for some time that Stalin's policy was one of mere Russian nationalism.
Boston, Mass. ALFRED PARKER LEWIS

. . . Russia must deal with Japan alone, no Western ally would assist her there. Once she settles the score in the East, she can afford to scan the Western horizon for further worlds to conquer.
Northampton, Mass. BETHEL NELSON

. . . Was it Stalin's Munich? He broke no agreement and deserted no friend. Why is it that when the Russians make a bargain everyone assumes that they will stick to it?
Lee, Mass. MARGARET SHIPMAN

. . . All that you say of Stalin's break with the past applies doubly to Hitler. Has not communism all these years been the Beast of his Apocalypse? Must he not now descend, in the eyes of his simple followers, from the role of Christ to the role of Judas? Stalin, on the other hand, has but forgiven his enemy, like a perfect Christian.
Oakdale, Calif. EDMUND KELLY JANES

. . . One cannot reconcile oneself to the thought that he who, until yesterday, was asked to boycott German-made goods because they were produced under the lash of barbarism, should all of a sudden change his mind.
Los Angeles, Calif. ISAAC KUSHNER

. . . Can anyone—after reading Voroshilov's statement to Izvestia, which has never been denied, that the British and French supported the Polish refusal to allow Russian troops to cross through Poland during wartime in order to engage the Germans in battle—believe that the French and English were really trying to put a halt to further Nazi aggression?
New York City H. G. S.

. . . When Raymond Gram Swing, Pierre van Paassen, Ludwig Lore, Ferdinand Lundberg and the editors of The New Republic are one with Coughlin and Mussolini's radio newscaster on this question, it becomes indeed a fit subject for investigation. There is something deeply suspicious about the whole business.
Detroit, Mich. ARTHUR CLIFFORD

No Time for Weak Links

SIR: This chain was started in Reno in the hope of bringing happiness to all. Unlike most chains, this one does not cost any money. Send a copy to five male friends, then bundle up your wife and send her to the person that heads the list. When your name works up to the top of the list, you will receive 15,625 women.

Have faith. Do not let the chain break. Let the good work go on.

THE RENO PROSPERITY CLUB, per O. L. Spencer, W. J. Hawkins, C. L. Bailey, Howard L. Ross, Stanley Jones, Don Herold
New York City

We Pass

SIR: Your comments on McNutt in the July 26 issue indicate how completely you mistake him. You bridge-playing liberals who exemplify "faith without work" are envious of his practical political methods. It is a case of a competent fighter using the fire to defeat the "devil." You now scoff, but let me be one of the first to foretell that you will remain to pray.

I invite you to print this, or at least to interview me at my expense.
Portland, Ind. H. J. BOURNE

From The New Republic Mail Bag

Matthew Rodermund, whose suggestion that Thomas Wolfe's stuttering had some psychological connection with his writing we abridged in the Mail Bag (August 23), says the item as printed done him wrong. He likes the magazine all right and thinks we are edited "superlatively . . . compared to most other liberal journals," but points out that the case as he made it was more general. It was. Stuttering is only one symptom of emotional maladjustment; "it is the turbulent emotional struggle in Wolfe . . . which is the secret of most of his good and much of his bad writing. The Mail Bag had me considering only the bad." In fact, he thinks Malcolm Cowley was too hard on the bad writing in his review of "The Web and the Rock." . . . N. L. Rothman, of New York City, agrees with this position and thinks it too bad we can't inoculate a few more contemporaries with a case of stutters. . . . Mrs. L. H. Mott of Los Angeles, California, found Maurice Zolotow's "Song and Dance Unions" (August 9) a great help in understanding the alphabetical mess of the actors' unions fight. . . . Pierre Loving, of New York City, points to the college-student survey held by Elmo Roper of the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism, and interpreted by Dean Carl W. Ackerman. He says the thing was obviously rigged—against Roosevelt's youth policies of course.

Joseph Lewis, of Purdys, New York, has extracted for us several paragraphs from Thomas Paine that might have been written of Europe today. "If the League of Nations," he concludes, "had been put into effect as [Paine in his Maritime Compact] formulated it, this present conflict would never have occurred." We agree. The same, of course, would go for Christianity and socialism.

We receive notice that the WPA Madrigal Singers—recently discharged by the notorious pinch-penny act of Congress—will give a concert in New York's Town Hall on the evening of September 26, the proceeds to go to the Student Refugee Fund. . . . The New York Poetry Center of the YMHA announces that Norman McLeod has been appointed its director. Those interested in courses being given beginning October 16 can get information from the YMHA at Lexington Avenue and Ninety-second Street, New York City.

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The Wartime President

IN A LONG INTRODUCTORY NOTE on President Wilson's papers, printed in Volume I of the life, Mr. Baker observed that unless he worked carefully his story would run to fifty volumes and nobody would read it. With Volume VIII [1] he calls a halt and refers the reader to his three-volume work, "Woodrow Wilson and the World Settlement," published in 1923, for an account of his hero at Versailles. This leaves the Wilson story truncated, for apparently Mr. Baker has no present intention of dealing with the years of decline in the house on S Street. Anyone with a warm heart will admit that it would be a difficult task to tell the sad story of those years, but Mr. Baker has already informed us that the documentation is exceptionally well prepared for use and is in his possession. Surely he should steel himself and continue his task to the bitter end.

It is Mr. Baker's conception that Wilson spent fifty-four years of his life in preparation, ten in living, and three in dying. It is upon the ten years of living that public interest is concentrated, from the moment of his election to the governorship of New Jersey to his retirement from the presidency of the United States. Into those ten years are crowded events momentous not only to Wilson as an individual but also to the masses of the American people and to the people of the whole world. Summarily, Wilson came into the political arena when the tide of reform was running strong and swam with it into the presidency: he played a central role in deflecting the national energy into the First World War; and he saw the liberal forces which made his career cheated and broken by the reactionary forces which he fought. Around him surged the most terrible passions of which men are capable: the passions aroused by planned social change, the passions aroused by the fighting of a war, the passions released by the prospect of punishing a bitterly hated enemy. It was Wilson's conviction that in the beginning was the word; he lived in a time when it was closer to the mark to think that in the beginning was the deed. Wilson's fifty-four years of preparation were, mostly, years of polishing the word; his ten years of living were an effort to assert the superiority of the word to the deed; his three years of dying were, so far as we now know, spent in pondering what deeds would bring order out of chaos. His last striking utterance was a warning to the men of power and place that if they did not put their house in order, the masses would repudiate and overturn them.

Mr. Baker's study of this remarkable man rises far above all competing works, not because it is the longest study, but because in spite of being the official life, it is not hagiographic. The author really tries to see Wilson plain, and in many of the volumes, notably those covering the period of neutrality, he is far more realistic than those who have less reason for glossing over the dreadful record. It is for this reason, rather than a desire to build up his hero, that Mr. Baker has diminished the statures of Colonel House, Walter Hines Page and Robert Lansing. These, he indicates, were woefully unfaithful servants to Wilson. Critical students of the time will agree. They will also applaud Mr. Baker for his contribution to the rehabilitation of William Jennings Bryan. Because Bryan resigned and because our entrance into the War seemed to ratify the position of his opponents, he long suffered a contempt he did not deserve. Mr. Baker repeatedly says that Wilson came around to one Bryan policy after another, but always too late. He even returned to them long after Bryan had left the Cabinet, and in the end he incorporated some of them into the Covenant of the League of Nations. Bryan stated his views, found them rejected, and resigned as honor dictated. House, Page and Lansing stayed on and undercut Wilson's views in the hope of winning Wilson to their own. Baker presents Page and House as British agents of high value—to the British. He views Lansing as Lansing viewed himself in his "Memoirs," as a double-crosser of exceptional ability.

In the early volumes which recount the fifty-four years of preparation for life, great emphasis is placed upon the intensity of Wilson's study of the problems of government. There is no cause for discounting the impression, but there is considerable point in bringing forward the fact that Wilson was late in coming around to a perception of the importance of economics in political affairs. His early interests were in institutions and ideals of government, the latter built upon a religious foundation which, as Mr. Baker says, was never critically examined. It was not until Wilson was well along in his presidency of Princeton that he really came up against economic forces in a fashion which impressed him into uttering his views about them. It was then that he found himself in "passionate revolt against money-dominated American society." This is not, however, so fundamental as it sounds or as Mr. Baker makes it out to be, for it was in large measure a verbalistic revolt against materialistic as opposed to idealistic standards. With Wilson economic action never went beyond increased regulation in the public interest. His deepest economic insight, indeed, was one from which he failed to profit: he saw, momentarily, that entrance into the World War would put an end to the period of reform and, in all likelihood, cancel many of the reforms already instituted. It did.

In fact, there was at the root of Wilson's thought a "fatal duality" exactly similar to that which Mr. Baker detects in public policy with regard to the World War. On pages 192-3 of Volume V, Mr. Baker writes:

> However we may repudiate the motive, the intricate business connections with the Allies developed during 1914, 1915, 1916—until the very economic life of the country rested upon the munitions traffic—stimulated a powerful interest in the victory of the Allies. On the other hand, German efforts to break up this relationship, with consequent injury to life and property, tended to provoke our government to vindication by force. There was a kind of fatality about it all, due on the one hand to the weakness and futility of the political power in such a crisis, with its inadequate legal sanctions, and on the other to the inexorable implications of a world-encircling economic system. No human being could, once the crisis arose, do much to change the disastrous course of events. And history since the War indicates in America neither a change in attitude toward this fatal duality nor any effective move to correct it.

[1] Woodrow Wilson: Life and Letters. Volume VIII: Armistice, by Ray Stannard Baker. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 639 pages. $5.

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This is not phrased exactly as I should phrase it, but it does shadow forth the difficulty which is apparent, in greater or less measure, to all of us. Men like Wilson—fine, high idealists—are equally victims of the economic forces of their times with the low, materialistic fellows they despise, the one because they do not take sufficient account of the harsh facts of the economic order, the other because they take too great an account. In working out their careers, the Wilsons create vast tragic dramas, the low fellows the knock-about comedy we know as Respectability.

It is a tribute to Mr. Baker that the vast biography he has written—eleven volumes to date and a twelfth very much needed—does contain all the elements of Wilson's tragedy. His life is unfolded before our eyes with a steady flow of documentary evidence that gives weight to the narrative at every crucial point. Woodrow Wilson lives and breathes and moves before us, deeply convinced of his own righteousness, impatient of present accomplishment because he has a glimpse of higher accomplishment beyond the horizon. With his devotion to the word, he clothes his most casual remarks in a rhinestone rhetoric the like of which the English tongue has rarely seen, the American never. But behind this man, this purpose, this rhetoric, is a vaster drama of which he had but a dim understanding: his casual glimpses of it made him hate it. It was the march of bourgeois society in America and the world from its preliminary stages of creative idealism (grounded in large measure in Protestant religious thinking) to the triumphs which gave confidence to its assertion of materialistic, anti-democratic, values, and on to its prospective disintegration. Volume VIII of Baker's narrative is full of the grumblings of the conservatives who hoped to stop Wilson and preserve their world: and it is equally full of the even more significant grumblings of the Bolsheviks—first in Russia, then in Europe, and even, rather feebly, in America—who wished to stop Wilson and destroy his world *and also* that of his opponents. To paraphrase a Victorian poet, Wilson carried to high expression an age that was dying; it was his hope that he was bringing a better to birth. One's verdict on Wilson's hope determines one's judgment on the man. At the moment the judgment of history is that the whole effort miserably miscarried. Baker's eleven volumes contain a story of our times which no serious diagnostician of them can afford to ignore.

C. HARTLEY GRATTAN

Books in Review

Delilah of the Ink-Pot

DOROTHY THOMPSON's "Let the Record Speak"[1] is a collection of newspaper columns, speeches, prefaces and radio broadcasts written during the crucial "white" war period of 1936-39. Although most of these definitely "occasional" pieces were dashed off in the heat of the moment (no emotion recollected in tranquility for Dorothy Thompson!), they have the pattern, the progression, the organization of a unified book. Moreover, they stand up as prophetic analysis: the débâcle of Munich, the Soviet desertion of the collective-security policy, even the final British and French ultimata of September 2-3, are all implicit in Dorothy Thompson's columns for 1936. On March 21 of that year she wrote: "The French peasant might fight today for a menaced Strasbourg, but hardly tomorrow for a menaced Prague." Such divination gives Dorothy Thompson the right to preen herself a little bit on her knowledge of European psychologies.

This knowledge of the state-of-mind of an entire continent is set forth in undeniably effective prose; Dorothy Thompson can write rings around any other newspaper columnist now performing in our journalistic three-ring circus. Her lament for the death of Ernst Toller brings a lump into your throat the size of an egg; her sardonic column on von Papen, the "international Typhoid Mary," is the subtlest and most devastating slating that it has ever been my privilege to read in a daily newspaper. But simply because she has the gift of unsettling your mind with an appeal to your emotions, Dorothy Thompson is a dangerous woman, a Delilah of the ink-pot. Ten years from now, when we look at this war period in a critical mood, she may loom out of the past as the Reverend Newell Dwight Hillis of the Second World War.

Dorothy Thompson is all intellect when she analyzes the immediate course of events in Europe. But she is all trembly emotion when she calls us to arms to do something about it. She denies at certain intervals that she believes in the *status quo ante* of Britain's traditional hegemony over the world; she wants a "new" imperialism devoted to raising the standard of living everywhere. Nevertheless, this impresses one as façade; Dorothy Thompson has never been able to formulate a program to break the monopolization of natural resources within any given country, nor has she ever been able to outline a workable peace program for Europe.

Her tendency is always to fall back on a balance-of-power Europe, run by England and France for the benefit of a democratic ideology that must always be at the mercy of petty nationalistic combines. And in her exaltation of British balance-of-power statecraft, she betrays the ultimate weakness of her otherwise first-rate analysis. For it was balance-of-power that created Hitler, just as it created Kaiser Wilhelm and Bismarck before him. Kill Hitler and restore the balance-of-power system to Europe—and Hitler will be reincarnated in some ugly troll shape fifteen years hence. Dorothy Thompson really knows as much when she stops to think about it, but her zeal prevents her from plugging away journalistically at the basis of a durable peace. She prefers, in her column, to make war.

Dorothy Thompson wishes fervently to preserve democracy in the United States. But going to war to preserve the Franco-British balance of power in Europe would hardly help our democracy; on the contrary, it would probably snuff it out under the blanket of an intolerable

[1] Let the Record Speak, by Dorothy Thompson. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 408 pages. $2.75.

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national debt. Miss Thompson thinks England and France are our buffer states; but buffer states can be booby traps for a nation that can defend itself more cheaply and effectively by fighting its wars on the high seas. It is true that we may need ideological buffer states, for, as Miss Thompson says, the Nazis are running an international revolution, and when they are through with England and France they may strike out at the Western hemisphere, using a propagandistic barrage to clear the way. But the only permanent way for the United States to beat totalitarian propaganda is by the indirection of raising the standard of living of our submerged third-of-a-nation. To the dispossessed and hungry, democracy is as democracy does; and if democratic capitalism can't provide an ever increasing amount of freedom and equality of opportunity, then it is doomed no matter what the Fascists do or fail to do. And since democracy must founder if production fails, one is quite within one's rights in demanding a program from Dorothy Thompson that strikes at the heart of the monopoly problem. One is tempted to fling at Miss Thompson the charge of faith without works. I will offer her a dare: let her read E. D. Kennedy's forthcoming "Dividends to Pay," and then, using that book as a springboard, let her either refute Mr. Kennedy's analysis or devise a way of egress from the economic dead-end which our democracy is fast approaching.

Dorothy Thompson began life as a reporter. She was a good one. But she is doing at least some of her head-work these days without the necessary preliminary leg-work. Her attack on Charles A. Beard is a case in point. Beard's advocacy of a self-contained economy on this continent, she says, must result in "some sort of national socialism." But Beard has never, to my knowledge, advocated complete isolation from the rest of the world: he believes in an essential minimum of international trade, in the "offering to exchange honest goods for honest goods without employing any engines of coercion" (I quote from page 319 of "The Open Door at Home"). That is not autarchy; it is common sense. All that Beard has ever assailed is the fake internationalism that pictures one's own foreign investments and competitive huckstering as sacrosanct while condemning another nation's methods as evil "penetration." Miss Thompson's picture of world trade is hopelessly simple, the picture of a Manchesterism that has never existed. Problems of exchange, problems of a debtor's position, problems of failure to provide oneself with enough superdreadnoughts, are waved aside by her as if they never existed.

Besides, it is not true that government interference with or direction of the flow of imports and exports must entail "some sort of national socialism." Little Denmark is a democracy, and will presumably remain one if Hitler does not gobble her up. But little Denmark made a three-year agreement with Britain in 1933 by which she guaranteed to take so much British coal and iron in exchange for such-and-such a market for Danish bacon. If government control of foreign trade necessarily entails "national socialism," then Sweden is a Nazi state, France is ruled by a Mussolini, and President Benes was the dictator of Czecho-Slovakia. So much for Miss Thompson's blindness about Charles A. Beard.

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

War on the Yellow River

Journey to a War, by W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood. New York: Random House. 301 pages. $3.

As one long sated with travel books about China, I find it agreeable to come upon the report of a journey there which does not let itself go in deep philosophizings about race and culture and profound musings on the nature of life. There is something about first landing on Chinese soil that tempts to cosmologizing, in cosmologies not very deep and all alike. Well, Auden and Isherwood resisted the temptation with a resoluteness that I for one applaud.

They went to China for one reason or another, they traveled about, used their eyes and had various experiences. And here they tell what happened to them and what they saw—Isherwood in prose, Auden in verse. And they tell it without pretentiousness but with zest, humor and an edge on their words. (In Auden's sonnets and "verse commentary" there is more than edge; there is beauty as well as bite, elusive but moving.) If sometimes they seem a bit *dégagé*, they bring you up sharp with a trenchant comment or a random observation that reflects China and Chinese, pure and authentic. They not only use their eyes but they can see, and there is a sure sense of selection in what they choose as worth telling.

There happened to be a war on in China when they went, so they provided themselves with credentials as correspondents. They construed their official duties freely, and they tell you little about the China-Japan war and that sketchily, but a good deal about war. You get the sense of the magnificent imperturbability of the Chinese, unshakable by fighting armies as by famine or flood or plague, by the depredations of man or of nature. That is what is generally and superficially called fatalism. It is really striking an accommodation with life, because you might as well. It is taking things in their stride, including Audens and Isherwoods, who have to be shown around in uncomfortable and dangerous places, when it would be more sensible to stay where it is pleasant. But if they have to be shown around, they have to be shown around. And if anything amusing turns up by the way, why not enjoy it? If Auden and Isherwood are rather casual about little episodes in the midst of what your mind tells you is horror, they are no more so than the Chinese who figured even more closely in the episodes. They reflect the atmosphere in which they were, which is good reporting and good art.

You get, too, the sense of Chinese messiness combined with the inexplicable capacity to come through messiness to successful completion. For every stage of any Chinese process—conducting a meeting, starting a train, fighting a war—is a tangled confusion till the very end, when everything falls into place as if by an engineer's drawing. This Auden and Isherwood felt, and they make you see why its sprawling anarchic freedom is attractive compared to the tight little fussy efficiencies of the Japanese—the race dwelling "In a calm stupor under their blood-spotted flag." And with all the lacks of the traditional accompaniments of war-making as white men make war, the Chinese go on making war under conditions in which European troops would mutiny within a fortnight, as Isherwood says.

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"The whole place," they write—of a moving-picture studio, as it happens—"looked very domestic and untidy and cheerful." An excellent description of China in a sentence. "The General laughed . . . with the chuckling indulgent air of placid superiority which the Chinese so often assume when the Japanese are spoken of." The whole of Japanese-Chinese relations in a sentence and, incidentally, the key to the ferocity with which the Japanese have made war. The Chinese consciousness of superiority is what goads them to fury, to needless slaughtering of Chinese to prove to them that there are times when they can't feel superior.

Good observation, good documentary material, good war reporting and good fun to read. Only the snobbish will find it trivial. Auden and Isherwood know how to be serious without being earnest, a valuable if not indispensable qualification for writing travel books, perhaps any other kind of book.

NATHANIEL PEFFER

Last Chapter

The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth: The Later Years, 1821-1850, arranged and edited by Ernest de Selincourt. New York: The Oxford University Press. 3 vols., 1,472 pages. $21.

WITH THESE THREE VOLUMES added to the previous three covering Wordsworth's early and middle years, Dr. de Selincourt brings a monumental collection to a close. To praise the industry and accuracy of his work as editor is superfluous. It is a rare pleasure to catch Dr. de Selincourt identifying the Mr. Heber referred to in letter 1,027 with the Bishop of Calcutta, instead of his half-brother Richard, especially since the letter, dated 1832, refers to Mr. Heber as being in England, while the footnote correctly records his death in 1826. It is a further satisfaction to remind him that O'Connell's name was Daniel, not David.

Necessarily these volumes have not the interest of the earlier three. They commemorate a period of poetic decline, from 1821 to 1850, of which the "Yarrow Revisited" poems and the Ecclesiastical Sonnets are the notable products. Wordsworth, however, took a great interest in the republication of his earlier works, and his letters to Moxon, his publisher, are full of business, and of lament at the bad market for poetry. "Dr. Arnold told me that his lads seemed to care for nothing but Bozzy's next no. . . . Can that Man's public and others of the like kind materially affect the question?" He rallies in defense of his earlier poems. Of "Goody Blake and Harry Gill" he recalls that Mr. Crabbe said that "Everybody must be delighted with that poem"; and he notes that "the 'Idiot Boy' was a special favorite with the late Mr. Fox and the present Mr. Canning." Most of Wordsworth's epistolary criticism was generously given to others, especially to aspiring young poets who dropped their books and manuscripts upon him. He was too often encouraging. "Such lines as the latter of the couplet,

> Where lovely woman, chaste as heaven above
> Shines in the golden virtues of her love

. . . give proof of no commonplace sensibility." This was, however, written to Moxon, and a poet must be gracious to his publisher.

For the rest, Wordsworth is much concerned about the politics of Catholic Emancipation and the Reform Bill, the careers of his sons, the marriage of his daughter Dora to Edward Quillinan, the dissipation of Hartley Coleridge, the passing of his contemporaries Coleridge, Lamb, Scott, Southey; the honors paid him in the laureateship and an Oxford D.C.L., and the recurrent illness in his family. Of this last the most tragic victim was Dorothy, "who in tenderness of heart I do not honestly believe [was] ever exceeded by any of God's creatures. Her loving kindness has no bounds. God bless her for ever and ever!"

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT

The Will to Death

The Hopkins Manuscript, by R. C. Sherriff. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.
The Gladiators, by Arthur Koestler. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

AT FIRST GLANCE no two books could be more unlike than these two. The first is a tale of the future, by the author of "Journey's End"; the second is a novel of the Slave War in Italy in 73-71 B.C., by a writer whose antecedents—even his language—the publishers do nothing to enlighten us about. Yet both books are political fables, and both reveal the same underlying mood.

"The Hopkins Manuscript" purports to have been discovered by the Royal Society of Abyssinia in the ruins of London about two thousand years hence. Its author is a retired schoolmaster who raises poultry in the country, journeying up to London only for the meetings of the British Lunar Association. The portrait of Edgar Hopkins as he reveals himself is a masterpiece. No satire could equal the irony of his own bare explanation of his motives. And not once during the fantastic events he lives through does he act or think out of character.

The moon, it is learned, has left its course, and will strike the earth on a given date. It misses Europe but lands in the Atlantic. Although the damage is terrific, this Wellsian cataclysm is not directly responsible for the ruins of London. Indeed, "All the bitterness and hostility, all the suspicions and racial hatreds that had threatened and darkened the closing years of the old world had gone forever. The nations of Europe had arisen from the ruins of the cataclysm, cleansed of greed, drawn into harmony by common disaster, determined to build a new world in friendship and mutual respect. The cataclysm had almost destroyed us, but from the ashes had arisen the United States of Europe."

But in the zeal for reconstruction one factor had been overlooked—the dislocation of the balance of power by the blocking of sea routes and the accession of undivided sources of raw materials. A crop of unscrupulous politicians sprang up all over Europe to take advantage of it. Things went from bad to worse until even little Mr. Hopkins thought: "The only way to stamp out this pest of 'Leaders' in Europe was to produce one ourselves, worse than any of them, and stronger. . . ." What follows is like a bitter parody of actuality, fading to a swift and most un-Wellsian end.

"The Gladiators," judged simply as a novel, is as tedious

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as Mr. Sherriff's story is enthralling. The elaboration of homely detail in the daily lives of subjects of Rome in the last days of the Republic does not make the actors real. Spartacus himself, though the only sympathetic character in the book, is convincing only in his public capacity. Explicitly the book achieves interest as a political treatise, the moral of which is expressed by the Consul Gellius: "There seem to be periods of human evolution during which the making of history is reserved to this type of Forever-Adolescent. It is not the type's fault, but History's. And I fear, my fine friend, that once more we live in one of those half-baked, immature times." Practically speaking, the Dictator as Reformer must be accepted as the inevitable consequence of a period of revolution, since the mature and the tried have been unsettled along with the merely traditional.

More interesting still are the psychological implications. The dominant mood of "The Gladiators" is supplied by the weariness of the slaves with the responsibilities of experiment and their desire to return to the normal Roman world, even though this spells servitude. From the first, liberty has meant license to the many in their ranks who were not fired by their leader's high ideals. A purge is necessary very soon. Shortly, to assure a great right, they must acquiesce in greater and greater wrong. In the end they give up.

Viewed in conjunction, the two novels are extraordinarily significant. Both the Englishman and the Central European betray a profound desire to escape from the present dilemma at whatever cost. If reform can be achieved only through revolution, if to preserve peace we must fight a war, the game does not seem to be worth the candle. Mr. Sherriff doubtless would be shocked to be told, however, that, just as Mr. Koestler is ready to renounce all ideologies and idealisms, he himself envisages the destruction of Western civilization as the easiest way out of further striving.

Apart from its interest as a document, "The Gladiators" is hard going. "The Hopkins Manuscript" you will not be able to take your eyes from until the last page, which you will be sorry to reach.

JAMES ORRICK

For Love of the Queen

Marie Antoinette: A Play by Upton Sinclair. New York: The Vanguard Press. 200 pages. $2.

THE PUBLISHING BUSINESS operates under lively laws of its own. So does California's most energetic and beguiling writer. When the two come together there's always news.

Who would have expected that Upton Sinclair would want to write a love story about Marie Antoinette? Who would have predicted that if Upton Sinclair did write such a story, he would consider it his duty to be scrupulously fair to everyone concerned, Queen, lover, royal cuckold and French revolution? Or that, having chosen to write the story in dramatic form, he would crown a lifetime feud with the capitalist press by inducing a commercial publishing house to bring out at its expense a fine-looking specimen of the most unsalable commodity on earth, an unproduced play? "How I Did It," the little book to follow—you're working on it, aren't you, Upton? —will be bought by one hundred thousand American playwrights and three times that number in Africa and Asia. No commercial publisher will touch it. It will appear under the Los Angeles imprint.

The Marie Antoinette play, I'm afraid, isn't very good. It picks up Marie at age fourteen, the day she enters France, and stays with her to the bitter end. There are three acts, twenty scenes and a chorus and, even so, considerable maid-and-butler dialogue is needed to wedge in the necessary information. (Ah Rochefoucauld, well met! And now, tell me all that has happened in the Kingdom of France in the last eleven years.)

The love story is charming. The lovers are put to bed in a very nice way and Marie, foolish and weak though she may be, is a fine figure of a woman. But with the old Sinclair prejudices and propaganda goes the old Sinclair punch. For about a quarter of a century Upton Sinclair's friends and critics have been begging him to lighten the black and darken the white in his fiction, to make the heavies a little less villainous and the heroes a little less holy. Possibly he wrote this stately drama simply to prove to them that they don't know what they want. But I think not. There is no malice in Upton Sinclair. I think he wrote from the purest of motives, from love—from love for the Queen of France.

BYRON DEXTER

New Books: A Reader's List

RUSSIA WITHOUT ILLUSIONS, by Pat Sloan (Modern Age, 75 cents). Seven years in Russia did not disillusion the author of this fluently written book. His stolid faith in Soviet institutions and leadership is grounded on a comparison between the average Russian's life before and after the Revolution. Many interesting details.

JUGGERNAUT: THE PATH OF DICTATORSHIP, by Albert Carr (Viking, $3). That dictatorship in most cases expresses the domination of reactionary social groups, and that the world today must choose between decay and "a successful revolutionary movement of the inferior economic classes," is here demonstrated by twenty well told "case histories" of absolute rulers from Richelieu to Hitler.

NEO-NEUTRALITY, by Georg Cohn (Columbia, $3.75). In the name of humanitarian ideals, the author, a prominent Danish jurist, advances historical and juridical arguments in favor of a new concept of neutrality which would relieve the non-belligerents from the obligation of impartiality. Instead, they would apply active measures to prevent or stop the war.

WASTED MANPOWER, by Corrington Gill (Norton, $2.75). A thoroughly readable, up-to-date study of the background, nature and present extent of unemployment in the United States. Concludes with a pointed analysis of the various measures—there is no single remedy—which are necessary for an amelioration of one of America's gravest problems. By the Assistant Commissioner of the WPA.

DOES DISTRIBUTION COST TOO MUCH? by Paul W. Stewart and J. Frederic Dewhurst (Twentieth Century Fund, $3.50). The research staff of the Twentieth Century Fund presents a factual survey of the changing role of distribution in our economic life, its social usefulness, its

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cost to the consuming public, and offers practical proposals for reform.

FOURTEEN RADIO DRAMAS, edited by Douglas Coulter (Whittlesey, $2.75). A selection of Columbia Workshop plays, including "The Fall of the City" but not the fall of Orson Welles, which made more noise. Several are radio originals, but even in the adaptations (*e. g.*, Eric Knight's "Never Come Monday"), radio, though growing, seems to offer no serious threat to any art over grade-school age.

Fiction

FIVE DESTINIES, by Anna Reiner (Knopf, $2.50). Even for a kid who just wants to mind his own business, growing up in Nazi Germany is no pleasure. That's Miss Reiner's point and she handles it beautifully. A sensitive, original novel, pardonably overwrought.

BROAD IS THE WAY, by Emerson Waldman (Farrar and Rinehart, $2.50). About a man who takes giant steps to money, and doesn't care whom he knocks down on the way. Because he's a Southerner and a Jew, enough irony underlines the story to give it force. No owner of a lending-library card, though, should be surprised at anything the hero or his mistress or his kind old parents say.

JOURNEY PROUD, by Thomasine McGehee (Macmillan, $2.50). There must have been a publisher caught humming "Carry Me Back." At any rate, someone's done it here again. Virginia and the Civil War, with some lively characters, a nice presentation of Southern pride and a gentle tear for the doomed plantation gentry.

WHITE BEN, by Clemence Dane (Doubleday, Doran, $2.50). The fanciful story of a scarecrow who is brought to life after the coming World War and becomes an English Hitler, personifying: "the natural human instinct to maltreat the harmless and destroy the happy." Suffers from the atmosphere of unreality found in most prophetic novels, but is written with much power and common sense.

BLOSSOM LIKE THE ROSE, by Norah Lofts (Knopf, $2.50). Taking us back a bit further than most novelists who brush up on American history, Miss Lofts sets her story near Salem, in the 1600's. A fine array of settlers here, and some encounters with the Indians that should be gory enough even for readers hardened by the daily papers.

ESCAPE, by Ethel Vance (Little, Brown, $2.50). Read this for information on how to smuggle an American woman out of a Nazi concentration camp just before they're set to execute her. An exciting, fast-moving story that most readers won't believe and won't think any the less of for that.

Contributors

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN, formerly the daily book reviewer of The New York Times, is an editor of Fortune.

ROBERT R. R. BROOKS is a professor of Economics at Williams College. He is the author of "When Labor Organizes" and "Unions of Their Own Choosing."

VINCENT SHEEAN, for many years a foreign correspondent, told the story of those years in "Personal History." His most recent book is "Not Peace But a Sword."

RAYMOND E. F. LARSSON has contributed poetry to The New Republic and other magazines. His books include "O City, Cities!" "Wherefore: Peace" and "A Sheaf."

C. HARTLEY GRATTAN's books include "Why We Fought," a study of America's entry into the World War, and "Preface to Chaos," a study of war in the modern world. His new book, about the first and second World Wars, "The Deadly Parallel," will be published next week.

NATHANIEL PEFFER has written "Must We Fight in Asia?" "China: The Collapse of a Civilization" and other books on the Far East. He is a member of the faculty of Columbia University.

JAMES ORRICK is the author of numerous articles and reviews in British and American periodicals, and of a volume in the publications of the English Goethe Society. He was for a number of years on the staff of the Oxford University Press.

BYRON DEXTER, a member of the staff of The New Republic, is the author of several plays.

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